Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-FOUR • NUMBER FOUR • OCTOBER 1992

ELECTION '92

Bush, Clinton & the Jews

A Debate

Daniel Pipes
Martin Peretz

Bosnia: The Return of History

Josef Joffe

Free at Last?

Glenn C. Loury

Their Lustration—And Ours

George Weigel

A Story

Ruth R. Wisse

Hayek and the Conservatives

David Glasner

Books in Review: Irwin M. Stelzer / Jeffrey Salmon / Jon D. Levenson / Charles Horner / Rachel Abrams

PUBLISHED BY THE AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE / $3.75

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

School of American Ballet student performance: Merrill Ashley, Gelsey Kirkland and Colleen Neary. Copyright: Martha Swope, 1967.

Thanks to the Library, American dance has taken great leaps forward.

American dance is more popular than ever, and one of the reasons is The New York Public Library's Dance Collection.

Choreographer Eliot Feld says the Library at Lincoln Center is "as vital a workroom as my studio." Agnes de Mille says, "the revival of any work is dependent on access to the Library's Dance Collection."

And they're not the only ones. For dancers and choreographers everywhere, over 37,000 volumes, 250,000 photographs, and an enormous film archive have been essential elements in the renaissance of American dance.

That's just one way The New York Public Library's resources serve us. The Library offers plays and puppet shows for children, programs for the elderly and disabled, extensive foreign language and ethnic collections, and scientific journals vital to the business community.

Again and again, the Library enriches our lives.

The New York Public Library

WHERE THE FUTURE IS AN OPEN BOOK

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Commentary

VOLUME 94 NUMBER FOUR *OCTOBER 1992*

Articles Bush, Clinton & the Jews—A Debate
15 *Daniel Pipes*
19 *Martin Peretz*

24 Bosnia: The Return of History *Josef Joffe*

30 Free at Last? *Glenn C. Loury*

34 Their Lustration—And Ours *George Weigel*

Story 40 Love and Loyalty *Ruth R. Wisse*

Observations 48 Hayek and the Conservatives *David Glasner*

Letters 2 from *Sharon Schuster, David M. Stillman, Rita Kramer, Michael Satanoff, Leon R. Kass, Adolph Grünbaum, Michael David Blume, A.E.P. Wall, Robert Joyce, Robert Hilferty,* and others

Books in Review 51 Head to Head, by Lester Thurow *Irwin M. Stelzer*

54 Rational Readings on Environmental Concerns, edited by Jay Lehr *Jeffrey Salmon*

56 Judas Iscariot and the Myth of Jewish Evil, by Hyam Maccoby *Jon D. Levenson*

60 China: A New History, by John King Fairbank; China in Our Time, by Ross Terrill *Charles Horner*

61 Home Fires, by Donald Katz *Rachel Abrams*

Editor-in-Chief
Norman Podhoretz

Editor
Neal Kozodoy

Managing Editor: Marion Magid
Associate Editor: Brenda Brown

Publishing Director: Steven Pippin
Advertising Director: Sarah M. Stern

Assistant to the Editors: Denise Rosner

COMMENTARY (ISSN 0010-2601) is published monthly by the American Jewish Committee—EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES: 165 East 56th Street, New York, NY 10022 Telephone: (212) 751-4000 FAX: (212) 751-1174. Unsolicited manuscripts must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Single copy is $3.75; $39 a year, 2 years $72, 3 years $105—Add $8.00 per year for all foreign subscriptions, including Canada and Latin America. For subscription information call: (800) 829-6270—Second-class postage paid at New York, NY and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to COMMENTARY, 165 East 56th Street, New York, NY 10022. Copyright © 1992 by the American Jewish Committee; all rights reserved under International and Pan American Copyright Conventions—Indexed in *Reader's Guide, Book Review Digest,* and elsewhere—Available in references produced by University Microfilms International (800-521-0600) and Information Access Company (800-227-8431)—U.S.A. Newsstand Distribution by Eastern News Distributors Inc., 1130 Cleveland Rd., Sandusky, OH 44870.

COMMENTARY is a member of The Leadership Network. Kiki Paris, Vice President, Sales (212) 889-5155. Advertising Representative for The Leadership Network: The Nobelhart Group, (202) 547-8488.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Statement of Aims

In sponsoring COMMENTARY, the American Jewish Committee aims to meet the need for a journal of significant thought and opinion on Jewish affairs and contemporary issues. The opinions and views expressed by COMMENTARY's contributors and editors are their own, and do not necessarily express the Committee's viewpoint or position. The sponsorship of COMMENTARY by the Committee is in line with its general program to enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights, and to promote Jewish cultural interest and creative achievement in America.

AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE
Alfred H. Moses, *President*

The Commentary Publication Committee

Robert L. Pelz, *Chairman*

Stanford M. Adelstein
Norman E. Alexander
Maurice S. Binkow
Donald M. Blinken
Theodore Ellenoff
Edward E. Elson
Howard I. Friedman
Stephen Friedman
Lawrence Goldmuntz
Robert H. Haines
Morton A. Kornreich
Herman J. Obermayer
Robert A. Riesman
Frederick P. Rose
Gordon S. Rosenblum
Gary L. Rosenthal
Michael Saperstein
Michael W. Schwartz
Nanette Scofield
Henry Sherman
Laurence A. Tisch

Letters from Readers

Schoolgirls

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Rita Kramer's thesis in "Are Girls Shortchanged in School?" [June] suggests that gender bias in the classroom does not exist or is not important. In her criticism of the report issued by the American Association of University Women (AAUW), *How Schools Shortchange Girls*, Mrs. Kramer goes so far as to suggest that perhaps girls may be genetically ill-equipped for math and science. Yet the report's exhaustive review of 1,331 scholarly studies and documents found pervasive sex discrimination from preschool through high school. The AAUW report has resonated deeply with parents and educators across America. They understand that education reform cannot succeed without addressing the gender-specific inequities that undermine the self-esteem and achievement of schoolgirls.

Commissioned by the AAUW Educational Foundation and researched by the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, the report found pervasive bias against girls in textbooks, tests, and teaching. This results in a dramatic drop in girls' self-esteem during adolescence and few girls pursuing interests in math and science. The report served as the catalyst for the first National Education Summit on Girls, attended by 40 leaders of the nation's top education and youth-serving organizations. The National Education Association, the Education Commission of the States, the College Board, the National PTA, the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, and others united for the purpose of making schools more equitable for girls and boys.

The report found further that while sexism has decreased in some school texts, girls and women are often portrayed in sex-stereotyped roles or omitted altogether. Historian Linda Kerber suggests a connection between the documented drop in self-esteem in adolescent girls and school curricula. She writes: "Lowered self-esteem is a perfectly reasonable conclusion if one has been subtly instructed that what people like oneself have done in the world has not been important and is not worth studying."

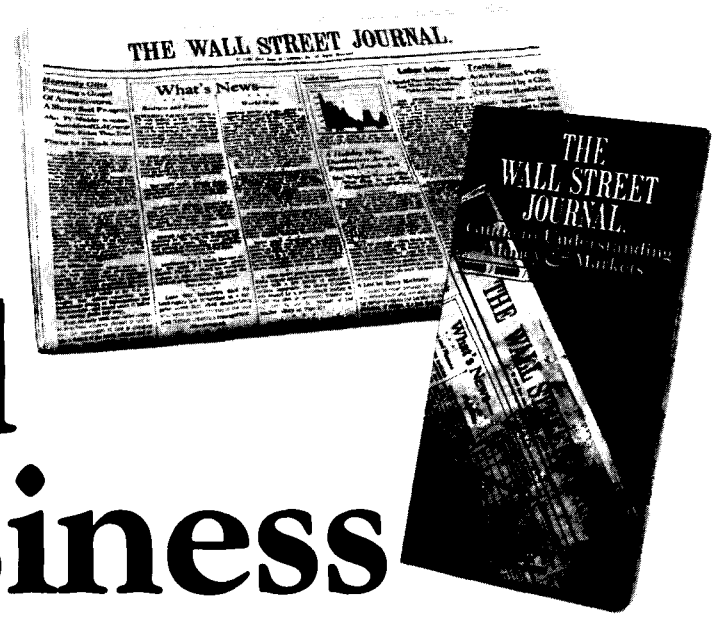
Research studies reviewed in the report also found substantial gender bias in standardized tests. One analysis of tests found twice as many references to men as to women, and more pictures of and references to boys than girls. A later study of the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) found references to 42 men and only three women in the reading-comprehension passages used in the four 1984-85 exams. Of the 42 men, 34 were famous and their work was cited; one of the three women was famous (Margaret Mead) and her work was criticized. Gender equity in tests is essential, as they are instrumental in deciding who passes, who goes to selective colleges, and who receives scholarships. Mrs. Kramer disregards this and suggests that we should just be thankful that more women than men go to college. She fails to acknowledge that women must obtain college degrees to earn even as much as the average man with a high-school diploma.

The report also found that incidences of sexual harassment of girls by boys among junior-high-school and high-school peers are increasing. This gives a clear message to both girls and boys: that girls are not worthy of respect and that appropriate behavior for boys includes exerting power over girls—or over other, weaker boys. It is unfortunate that Mrs. Kramer does not see this as something that needs to be addressed.

Furthermore, research spanning the past twenty years consistently reveals that males receive more teacher attention than do females. In many classrooms teachers call on boys more frequently than girls, take more time responding to them, and even allow boys to "call out" answers while instructing girls to "Raise your hand if you want to speak." Mrs. Kramer asserts, "there is no evidence that this kind of attention translates into learning more. . . ." But if a student isn't called on, she has less incentive to pay attention to the lesson, and gets less practice articulating her thoughts and speaking before a group. Ann Pollina, dean of faculty at Westover School in Connecticut, says, "Girls are very polite. They will be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It's simply good business to cut right to the dotted line.



In business–in fact, in just about any endeavor–there's a fine line between keeping up and staying one step ahead. And often, the people who stay ahead are the people who are best informed.

That's where The Wall Street Journal comes in. It gives you a broad perspective on business, and valuable information on your competition...on marketing...on technology... on politics...on corporate and financial events throughout the U.S. and the world. And only The Journal gives you this essential information with such insight and clarity.

The Wall Street Journal–every business day. The Guide to Understanding Money and Markets–FREE. What more do you need to know?

The Guide to Understanding Money and Markets sells for $13.95. But With This Offer, It's Yours Free.

This invaluable 120-page, easy-to-read reference book defines and explains a variety of investment terms, so you can make full use of your money-making opportunities. It's a $13.95 value, yours FREE when you get 13 weeks of The Journal for just $37.

So here's the dotted line. You know what to do.

Cut out this coupon now for The Journal and your FREE Guide.

☐ Yes. Send me 13 weeks of The Journal for just $37.
☐ I prefer six months (26 weeks) for just $71.
With either choice, send my FREE Guide as soon as you receive payment.

☐ Payment enclosed *(payable to The Wall Street Journal)*.

☐ Charge my: ☐ American Express ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

Card No. ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Signature _____ Expires _____

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.
228 East 45th Street
Suite 1515
New York, NY 10017

Name *(please print)* _____

Address _____ Suite/Apt. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Limited time offer–good in the continental U.S. only. 1COME/39CA

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bored but not disruptive. . . . It's a positive quality to sit quietly and be entertained, but it's a negative quality for education."

It may be a negative quality for another reason. Carmen Cid Benevento, associate professor of biology at Eastern University in Connecticut, points out that "Girls are not being encouraged to be curious and ask questions. And what does a scientist do? A scientist thinks inquisitively, goes out, asks questions . . . so all the behaviors of a scientist are not being encouraged in girls."

Perhaps most disturbing is Mrs. Kramer's view that women may be unfit, due to their genetic makeup, for mathematics and science. The report found that in comparison to boys, few girls go on to pursue careers in math and science. Even girls who are highly competent in these areas often decline to study them in college. She suggests that biological factors "may have something to do with the relative disinclination of girls to study these subjects [math and science]. . . ." In contrast to this view, the report showed that the gender gap in math achievement narrowed in recent years as efforts were made to reach and teach girls.

Gender bias is a cultural factor reflected not only in schools but also in the mass media, interpersonal relationships, and the workplace. The report recognizes and focuses on schools because of their significance in children's socialization processes. The fact that women's options are limited in our culture—by ideas people carry about what it means to be female or male—is no excuse for perpetuating the pattern in the classroom. We owe it to our daughters, and our sons, to strive to make the classroom more equitable for all students.

SHARON SCHUSTER
President, American Association
of University Women
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Rita Kramer's article is right on target about the flaws in the recent report of the American Association of University Women and about the crackpot philosophy of Dr. Peggy McIntosh of the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women.

After reading Mrs. Kramer's discussion of the bizarre lecture that McIntosh gave our teachers here in Brookline, Massachusetts, COMMENTARY readers will be surprised to learn that the Brookline schools have adopted McIntosh's anti-intellectual fantasies. At a public forum on multiculturalism in the Brookline schools, held one month after McIntosh's lecture to our teachers, our Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum stated that McIntosh's characterizations are "very useful as ways to set a general framework and also as a means of commenting on what goes on in Brookline as regards an inclusive curriculum." She also said that the fulfillment of McIntosh's "100-year plan" for developing a new epistemology "is unfortunately a lot farther away than many of us might like to think."

As the father of a bright girl who attends the Brookline public schools, I know the results of McIntosh's faddish New Age Luddism firsthand. McIntosh's pseudo-egalitarian program seeks to cure educational inequities by curtailing achievement and by subordinating individuals to groups. For instance, in math, my daughter was placed with children of lesser attainment and given a collective grade based on the total number of problems solved by her group, a misguided technique that made a nine-year-old child responsible for her school's failure to bring her peers up to speed. Thus, a bright girl was alienated from math. Talk about shortchanging girls!

McIntosh's bogus spiritualism conceals less ethereal motives. In her lecture to the Brookline teachers, as in the AAUW report, there is a preoccupation with funding that would make most capitalists blush. The gender-bias industry, through university appointments (both faculty and administrative), consulting, and foundation grants, consumes millions of dollars annually. Obviously, one woman's oppression is another's pot of gold.

Peggy McIntosh has lectured in 40 states in a program of "reeducating faculty." Parents, beware. Cloaked in a saintly mantle of gender justice, her Pol Pot approach to schooling may be just around the corner for your child, too.

DAVID M. STILLMAN
Brookline, Massachusetts

RITA KRAMER writes:

Sharon Schuster's statement that I describe girls as "genetically ill-equipped for math and science" and, farther on, "unfit, due to their genetic makeup, for mathematics and science" is typical of the way representatives of the AAUW distort and misrepresent any argument that suggests conclusions different from those they espouse. Nowhere in my article do I say anything at all about "genetic" components—the word is never mentioned. Presumably what Miss Schuster is referring to is my comment that the AAUW report ignores "the possibility that biological, developmental, or cultural factors may well have something to do with the relative disinclination of girls to study" science, mathematics, and technology. She obviously does not understand that nurture and culture interact in subtle and complex ways with psychological and biological development.

It is the report's simple-minded view that what happens in school disproportionately and dramatically influences what people go on to become in later life. But how we think, what we value, what we wish for ourselves, are in large part determined by patterns of response which are inherited, handed down from generation to generation in the same way that family portraits or religious beliefs are handed down. These acquired characteristics are not, of course, genetically determined, although there is a good deal of scientific data available suggesting that there are certain fundamental characteristics associated with sexual differences which *are* genetically determined, such as degree of aggressivity, large and small motor development, etc. Whether or not such factors translate into predispositions to deal more or less effectively with the abstractions involved in mathematics and science or with, say, verbal skills versus manual dexterity, or character traits like competitiveness versus passivity, is not something I feel qualified to judge. I would be very surprised if Sharon Schuster possessed such qualifications, given the evidence both in her letter and in the report itself of failure to understand what it is that constitutes scientific evidence for a given hypothesis.

For example, the report's "exhaustive review of 1,331 scholarly studies" that she cites is neither exhaustive nor scholarly. Most of the material is trivial and/or outdated and nothing is included that

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

might go against the conclusions which the report was designed to reach. The "self-esteem" argument is an ignorant view of how concepts of self are arrived at, and disregards the role played by experience in the earliest years of life and within the family, long before children have entered school. It is propaganda, not science. Children are not as easily or as casually influenced in basic ways as the AAUW report would like us to believe.

Again, one hardly knows how to respond to the idea that boys or girls can only deal with test questions involving individuals of their own gender. This is nonsense, pure and simple, and the kind of thinking that is destroying our schools. So too are the classroom strategies suggested in the report's "Action Guide" for implementation of "sex equity"—a goal which seems to take precedence over all other instructional aims mentioned. One hardly knows whether to laugh or cry at such suggestions as a proposed composition-class assignment to write a non-sexist story beginning with the sentence, "Nadine put on the boxing gloves and stepped into the ring," or a proposed chart on which the teacher, to eliminate gender discrimination, is urged to keep a record of how many seconds she waits for an answer from male and female students respectively, before calling on another student. This is not education, it is manipulation bordering on coercion.

In short, nothing in Sharon Schuster's letter or the report itself is really concerned with education, with science, or with objective fact. The concern, pure and simple, is political. It is about defining women as a victimized group and "empowering" them as such. The sought-after rewards in all this are money and power in the form of group entitlements, and the results for our schools and the children in them are delineated clearly enough in David Stillman's letter, which describes the disgraceful lowering of educational standards that resulted in one particular school from the curriculum put in place by ideological zealots like the authors of the AAUW report. Mr. Stillman's letter, for which I thank him, eloquently demonstrates what we are in for if the AAUW's call for making the classroom "more equitable" succeeds.

Father Noah

To the Editor of Commentary:

Leon R. Kass's "Seeing the Nakedness of His Father" [June] is a lively, insightful, and . . . brilliant analysis of the story of Noah. Needless to say, his article is most powerful and provocative as a reflection on the human condition in these modern times. While I will leave it to someone much bolder than myself to come to the defense of the modern "paganism" which Mr. Kass sees all around us, I feel that an attempt must be made to come to the defense of ancient Athens.

Mr. Kass offers an instructive and partially fair assessment of the philosopher when he implies that the latter is the kind of person "utterly without *aidos*" (awe and reverence). Socrates, in the same conversation in which, as Mr. Kass says, he "playfully proposed common gymnasia for men and women," eventually proposed a city . . . which would allow for incestuous relationships among its citizens. While no less playful, it is particularly revealing. Philosophy ceases to take for granted the criminality of something like sleeping with one's relatives. To be sure, and in defense of Mr. Kass, Socrates reveals such things somewhat esoterically; the Ancients (at least) did not lack moderation when it came to the problem of the city and man. Still, while he amends his description of the philosopher, Mr. Kass seems to suggest that the philosopher lacks enough "awe, fear, reverence, shame, and modesty" to spark the scorn of the biblical "point of view," even in light of such a sympathetic qualification. In the context of law-abidingness and righteousness such a conclusion is justifiable, but when Jerusalem and Athens are placed in the same ring, one must allow for some stepping outside of the boundaries.

This being said, one wonders whether philosophical inquiry would be possible at all without an almost immoderate reverence *for* authority. In the face of a philosophy teacher or a philosophic text, the possibility of genuine learning requires a strongly lingering level of shamefulness and respectfulness, without which one finds little motivation for demystifying or uncovering the "unvarnished truth." Mr. Kass surely sees this. And his reverence for the authority of his text allows us to see, if we have not seen already, that there is more to the book of Genesis than meets the eye. One must take for granted—take on authority—that the book of Genesis is awesome enough and profound enough to teach us something before we can actually learn something of what it has to teach us. It is the kind of text which fills us with wonder, or even "shameless curiosity" only when we first suspect that it somehow all fits together (why else pay such attention to the ordering of the names of Noah's sons?). The same holds true for something like a Platonic dialogue. And, I might add, the same holds true, or should hold true, for one's teachers.

Ancient philosophy, on this level at least, cannot be depicted as "utterly without *aidos*." Socrates, as Plato presents him, was all too aware of the necessity that teachers, in order to be effective as teachers, must remain authorities. While these authorities are to be wrestled with, they must nevertheless remain authorities and not become, as Mr. Kass puts it, "just one of the boys." Our college teachers today walk into their classrooms stripped, as it were, of their clothing—all distinctions are odious. If this is not a state of affairs brought about willingly, there are enough pressures in our academic institutions to ensure that wearing clothing becomes politically uncomfortable. Socrates may be "chuckling in Hades," but as far as I can tell, he is chuckling nervously.

Michael Satanoff
SUNY
Stony Brook, New York

To the Editor of Commentary:

It is surprising that Leon R. Kass, in discussing the problems created by rebellious and disrespectful sons, does not mention the Bible's explicit command: they are to be stoned to death (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). This fate is also decreed (Deuteronomy 22:13-23) for adulterers and for brides who are found not to be virgins. Having perused some of Mr. Kass's writings, I have no doubt that he is troubled by the contrast between these precepts and the commandment "Thou shalt not kill." Others, however, will remember Deuteronomy 12:32: "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Also to be remembered are the threats contained in passages where God describes the vengeance He will wreak for disobedience (Deuteronomy 28:15-68; also, Leviticus 26:14-33).

I am unable to detect in the Bible anything describable as natural moral law, i.e., law derived through reasoning based upon human observation and experience. The essence of biblical morality is supernatural: commands are issued directly by God or by His chosen representatives on earth. The story of Abraham and Isaac will serve as a paradigm. Abraham gains favor with God through his willingness to kill his son for no reason other than God's command; obedience is all-important, and nothing else counts. A similar point is underlined by God's response to the lamentations of Job. It is an assertion of raw power rather than a justification. Job, after his lapse into self-assertiveness, is restored to favor when he displays the required servility.

DAVID A. SHOTWELL
Alpine, Texas

LEON R. KASS writes:

My hat is off to Michael Satanoff. His letter would fulfill any author's dream: to receive a reply from a serious, generous, and thoughtful reader, who has tried to understand and has succeeded, and who in response presses a profound question from which the author may himself learn.

Mr. Satanoff's question about shame and learning cuts well in two directions. First, though he concedes that philosophical inquiry is in principle at odds with pious law-abidingness, he rightly observes that this condemns philosophy only in the court which flies the banner of law-abidingness. On its own (philosophical) turf, the pursuit of the unvarnished truth makes shame-filled obedience to convention look like spiritual bondage. Mr. Satanoff could be pointing, for example, to Plato's cave. Or perhaps he is thinking too of Aristotle, likewise taking philosophy's side against tradition, who denies that awe or shame is even a virtue, but is merely a useful passion in the young. I have no quarrel with this beginning assessment. Indeed, though praising the pious covering of Noah by Shem and Japheth, I noted, starkly, that "their piety *is* a kind of (willing) blindness. They knowingly choose to live leaving some things in the dark, without pressing back to the naked truth about temporal beginnings or ultimate origins. They embrace authority and, implicitly, life under law."

But whether this apparent tension between piety and philosophy, or between shame-filled law-abidingness and shameless inquiry, is finally genuine and permanent depends on what is finally true about the world and its highest principle. Would not even the truth-seeking Socrates be filled with awe and fear were he to be addressed out of the burning bush, or were he to hear the revelation at Sinai? And what if philosophy, quite on its own, were to conclude on *philosophical* grounds that, not speculation but righteousness is man's highest (realizable) possibility, and therefore undertook (following Kant) to prosecute the work not of metaphysics but of morality? Might not then the truth itself insist that *aidos* is a virtue?

Mr. Satanoff tries himself to bring reverence and philosophy together in his second sailing, even more intriguing than the first, in which he maintains that *aidos* before books and teachers is indispensable for learning. He is, of course, dead right that one must respect a book before one is willing to read it with the care necessary to learn from it; and I do indeed submit gladly (but not thereby thoughtlessly) to the master teachers which are the great books. But I do not regard these books as *authorities* or authoritative. Rather, they are guides or friends who help one in the quest for truth. A great book is to be greatly respected because it is written with the author's own at least tacit reverence for reason and truth. Truth and being alone are authoritative for philosophy.

One can respect a book but one is more likely to feel awe and shame before revered persons, including teachers. Even great men are not immune. The brilliant Alcibiades felt shame only before Socrates, in whose presence he had to confront his own abandonment of (what he knew to be) the more worthy pursuit of wisdom for the less worthy pursuit of fame through rule. And although *aidos* before teachers seems different from filial piety, it is indubitably true that students who do not respect their teachers cannot learn from them.

Why do we respect our teachers? Why do we submit to the assignments they make or take seriously the questions they raise or the opinions they offer? Not because they are necessarily natively smarter or humanly better. Nor because we think that they are simply wise. We respect, and even revere, them for two related reasons. First, the teacher (like the book) has authority because of what he looks up to as authoritative: to what is simply so. So-called teachers who teach only themselves or their ideologies may be admired for their power or envied for their virtuosity; but only a genuine teacher, one who himself submits to the argument and to reasonable speech, is worthy of respect. Second, the teacher commands respect not only because of "his office" as guide-toward-truth, but because of the benefits obtained from time already spent in that office. His greater experience of books, questions, and the world make it more likely that he will indeed be able to help us *learn for ourselves*. Thus, the teacher has a paradoxical authority. Respect for the teacher, as a "non-authoritative authority," is necessary if the teacher is to lead the student toward intellectual liberation.

Curiously, much the same can be said for the reverence owed to parents, the subject of my article. Honor is of course due them because we owe them for our very existence. But the office of parenthood is also an office of teaching and initiation, not into the liberal arts but into the ways of upright adulthood. Here, too, reverence for parents is an indispensable means for helping us grow up to take their place—God willing, as beings worthy of similar reverence. Students who lack respect are unlikely to learn, children who are impious are unlikely to be well-reared. And teachers and parents with no reverence for their callings can only visit their own sins on the young. Not by accident will Canaan be cursed if he happens to be the son of Ham.

David A. Shotwell has aimed wide and shot badly. He rants against my other writings and even more against the Bible, but he addresses my interpretation of the sons of Noah not at all. But his letter is instructive for one reason, as a symptom of what one might call the rationalist disease. Like so many others of his ilk, Mr. Shotwell

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is so convinced that the Bible contains teachings sustainable only by belief in an arbitrary, hence irrational, deity that he refuses to enter into reading it with any hope of learning something. Lacking any respect for a text like Genesis, whose stories are, to say the very least, humanly revealing, he cheats himself of an opportunity to learn. Because he cannot conceive that even an inspired text might still be accessible to reason, or teach things that make sense to reason, he insists that those who claim to learn from the text must be irrationalists. I feel sorry for him. Were he to reread my essay, he might find that the story of Noah's sons holds a key to his self-understanding—in the attitude and deeds of Ham, his spiritual forebear. Better yet, he should try to take instruction from Mr. Satanoff's letter, not only from its example of genuinely rational thoughtfulness but also for its suggestion that respect for truth wherever it may be found is indispensable for learning.

Pluralism & the Church

To the Editor of Commentary:

In his important article, "The New Anti-Catholicism" [June], George Weigel relates and deplores the history of allegations in the United States that an ascending tyrannical "Romanism" or "Papism" poses a threat to the pluralism of American democracy. The burden of his article, however, is a plea against a secularist, anti-transcendentalist polity.

Mr. Weigel recounts a major episode that, ironically, is a valuable object-lesson in the dangers run by adopting politically an "absolute" standard of morality on theological grounds:

> It is of . . . moment . . . that classic American Protestant anti-Catholicism in the 19th and early 20th centuries simply took it as self-evident that American democracy required a religious foundation: specifically, a Protestant religious foundation. Absent this, it was widely believed, there were but two possible outcomes to the American experiment: a revival of premodern despotism (linked to Rome), or moral anarchy leading, in short order, to political collapse.

Significantly, Mr. Weigel adds that none of the advocates of this Protestant anti-Catholicism "ever

You need high fixed, secure income. Israel needs your ultimate support !

HISTADRUT IS THE NATIONAL GUARDIAN OF THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL

IHF
ISRAEL HISTADRUT FOUNDATION supports Histadrut's National Social Service Network

Histadrut builds and maintains the Social Service, (Health,Welfare, and Educational) Infra - structure for over 4 Million of Israel's people.

A Unique Secure Charitable Annuity Trust

Offering to the Donor and / or their Beneficiary, payable quarterly for life, high, non -fluctuating interest payments.

(minimum contribution $2500.00)*

Ages	% Payout
40-50	7.5%
50-55	8%
56-60	8.5%
61-65	9%
66-70	9.5%
71-over	10%

* Partial charitable tax deduction on principal

CLIP AND MAIL THIS COUPON

Israel Histadrut Foundation
276 Fifth Ave. Suite 901, New York, NY 10001
Telephone: 212- 683-5454

ATTENTION: Elaine Levitt, Executive Director, N.E. Area

I am interested in further information concerning the Charitable Annuity Trust of the Israel Histadrut Foundation.

❒ Please send me your free brochure

❒ Please contact me for a confidential appointment at your offices to discuss the Histadrut Annuity Trust.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Zip: _____ Phone: _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dreamed of advocating a secularist polity in which religion would be ruled out of the public debate."

Thus, by Mr. Weigel's own account, it was not a secularized state that generated the anti-Catholic turn he bewails; it was, rather, the denominational insistence on an absolute, divinely sanctioned morality amid the conflicting theological revelations. Despite ecumenicism, the strife among the gospels seems ineradicable: witness the recent breakdown of negotiations between the Vatican and the Anglican Church, which were to yield an ecumenical composition of their theological differences. Or just contemplate the likelihood that Orthodox Jews will become persuaded of the salvific divinity of Jesus!

Unaware that his chronicle boomerangs, Mr. Weigel concludes by misformulating the clash of ideas between secular humanism and a public policy informed by a religiously transcendent morality. As he would have it, this confrontation (the Bismarckian *Kulturkampf*) is "a struggle between those who affirm the classic Jewish and Christian notion of an objective moral order, and those who deny on epistemological grounds that there is any such thing as an 'objective moral norm.'" Having posed the issue in these terms, Mr. Weigel speaks conjunctively of "secularism and moral relativism."

But surely the secularist's this-worldly warrant for ethical norms is *neutral* as between an "objectivist" and a "relativist" construal of their epistemological status. To deny that our moral code has a transcendent religious foundation is not to rule out the objectivity of its secular grounds. Nay, ironically, the cacophony of divergent absolutist revelations is effectively tantamount to *moral relativism* as between the rival religious subcultures.

Indeed, the theological trappings of ethics are morally unavailing. It was Socrates who permitted us to realize that if a religious creed is to yield any specific moral prescriptions at all, the ethics must be *extraneously* imported or *tacked on* to theism by being put into the mouth of God by the clergy, when asserting His goodness or omnibenevolence. This moral sterility of theism comes into view from the failure of divine omnibenevolence to deal with the challenge posed by a key question from Socrates in Plato's *Euthyphro*: is the conduct approved by the gods right, because of *properties of its own*, or merely because it pleases the gods to value or command it? In the former case, divine omnibenevolence and revelation are at best ethically superfluous, and in the latter, they are unavailing.

For if God values and enjoins us to do what is desirable in its own right, *then ethical rules do not depend for their validity on divine command, and they can then be independently adopted.* But, on the other hand, if conduct is good merely because God decrees it, then we have the morally insoluble problem of deciding *which one* of the conflicting purported divine revelations of ethical commands we are to accept.

ADOLPH GRÜNBAUM
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As a person of mixed ancestry who has spent parts of his life both as a Conservative Jew and a Roman Catholic, and as one deeply attached to classical liberalism, I am disgusted by many of the items George Weigel has adduced as instances of anti-Catholicism, and broadly sympathetic to his exceptionally well-written treatment of the subject. Nevertheless, there are certain philosophical problems revolving around the concepts of pluralism and secularism, perhaps unavoidable in a journalistic essay.

First, pluralism. Mr. Weigel says that it is the secularists "who wish to level the crags and peaks of American conviction." He implies that pluralism, rather than being a concept conducive to civic peace, is a positive good, if only on aesthetic grounds. This is arguable when talking about the diverse residue of ethnic customs but not especially so when talking about fundamental beliefs. If something is true, or, at any rate, best to believe, we want it disseminated, we want others to believe it. Pluralism is only a positive good if we lack conviction. So long as there are groups with conviction (including secularists), it is inevitable that there will be friction, especially in areas like education. Pluralism is meant to suppress intercommunal tension insofar as is possible, yet it cannot completely eliminate tension without eliminating conviction.

Protestantism arose from a belief that Christian belief and practice had been perverted by Rome. In fact, though the growth of tolerance is desirable, Protestants must consider their Christianity purer than Catholicism or there would be no point to the persistent schism. There are actual doctrinal issues as well as a history of serious intercommunal strife between Catholics and Protestants, with atrocities on both sides, that have only gradually become remote.

Similarly, secularism is, almost by definition, anti-religious, anti-Christian, and, *a fortiori*, anti-Catholic, since Catholicism is institutionally and intellectually a more powerful challenge than other denominations. There is a vast difference between an inevitable antagonism manifested by secularists and the more virulent incivility and unfairness that Mr. Weigel rightly decries. That secularists hope to prevail in disseminating their point of view is simply normal.

Next, secularism itself. Mr. Weigel asserts that, for secularists, "there is no transcendent moral horizon by which public policy can be critically analyzed," and seems to imply that morality must grow out of religious conviction, with all else being nihilism. No doubt, religion promotes conscientiousness (but also, at times, fanaticism). Still, there are various philosophic sources for a secular ethic. Aristotle, for example, derives ethics from a consideration of man's needs as a social animal characterized by rationality; in other words, human nature. Kant considers that we each propose the most fundamental moral laws autonomously, as expressing our dignity as rational beings; in other words, we are capable of recognizing the appropriate laws governing rational beings through introspection. Utilitarians such as John Stuart Mill posit an essential stake in the well-being of others arising from our gregariousness, and therefore propose social arrangements most conducive to the happiness of the majority. . . . To say that secularism is necessarily and essentially nihilistic is as much a canard as calling Catholicism inherently un-American.

It might improve the tenor of debate over numerous issues in this country if secularists stopped treating the sincerely religious as if they were addled authoritarians, and if the religious stopped treating the secular as if they were

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

amoral anarchists. But I do not expect such a widespread softening of rhetoric any time soon.

MICHAEL DAVID BLUME
Annapolis, Maryland

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Weigel is quite right, I believe, in recognizing that the current opposition to some of the actions of the Catholic Church is not "a secularized form of the old Protestant disdain for 'Romishness'" but part of a new movement toward secularism. But this secular movement is not anti-Catholic any more than it is anti-Protestant or anti-Jewish. Nor is this secularism opposed to "any notion of transcendence, and particularly a religiously informed transcendence," as Mr. Weigel asserts. How could it be, when it is a view held by a large majority of Americans who consider themselves believers in God and who, for the most part, consider themselves Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish?

What makes *this* humanism "the dominant moral ideology of American public culture" (as James D. Hunter described it in *Articles of Faith, Articles of Peace,* 1988) is that it allows for and even encourages every kind of religious belief in our private lives while removing religion from our public life. It has its roots in the separation of church and state that originated in the 18th century; and, like our founding fathers, its supporters are concerned only with preventing the large majority of Americans from having to accept a religious belief held by a minority. In this context, it is perfectly consistent for the majority of churchgoers to oppose any attempt by *any* church to impose a religious prohibition (whether on abortion, homosexuality, euthanasia, etc.).

If this is "secularism," it is a secularism that gives Americans greater religious freedom than those who live under governments dominated by one particular religion. Moreover, in a nation where our common values are not dominated by any particular religion, these values are constantly being changed in an ongoing debate in which every religious group can participate.

That is why it is surprising to find Mr. Weigel accusing secularism of basing its morality on "power in its basest form, the capacity to force others to acquiesce to one's will." Surely he knows that force has been used . . . by those who see their truth as transcending ordinary human experience, and that those who see truth as relative to human needs cannot logically (and have not historically) used force to establish their truths. Perhaps the great threat to rational debate now comes from the Left rather than from the Right, as Mr. Weigel asserts. But in both cases, the impetus for the use of force comes from the same belief that one party, one Church, or one race has the Truth and there is thus no need for continued debate.

I agree with Mr. Weigel that the Catholic Church in this country is very different from what it was in Spain 60 years ago. But to the extent that it is now in accord with our democratic principles, it and all religions should accept the fact that the opportunity to affect the moral values in our society, including the laws passed by our government, can be no greater than the opportunity given to other groups and individuals with very different views. Whatever may have been true in the past, most religious Americans now accept this kind of pluralistic democracy, and will not be frightened away by having it called "secularism."

LAWRENCE HYMAN
Ridgewood, New Jersey

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Weigel's generally splendid article on "The New Anti-Catholicism" repeats the suggestion that Norman Vincent Peale opposed John F. Kennedy's nomination on religious grounds. After running across that story several times, I wrote to Peale about a dozen years ago to ask him about it.

He replied that his comments had been grotesquely twisted in the press. He said that he had made no such judgment about John F. Kennedy and that he held no anti-Catholic views. Peale said that he was so distressed by what he described as the misrepresentation of his views that he tried to avoid press interviews from that time on.

THE JET LAG WATCH®

A wholly new and patented watch for jet lag has finally landed on the market. This exciting product addresses the frequent traveler's need to adapt quickly to a new time zone.

How to feel alive when you arrive

Jet lag is no stranger to the frequent traveler or even to the once-a-year vacationer. Now, the Jet Lag Watch helps you tackle an important part of the problem: the psychological toll — that jarring shift from one time zone to another.

Time flies as you do

The Jet Lag Watch smoothes the transition between time zones by speeding up or slowing down time as you fly. Let's say you are flying from New York to Paris on a 7 PM flight. You program your Jet Lag Watch when you board, and the watch slowly gains time as you fly east. As you glance at your watch throughout the flight, you are gradually eased into the European time zone. When you land, seven hours later, your watch reads 8 AM *and you believe it.* It then resumes running at normal speed. Even if you cross the International Date Line, your watch shows the correct time and date.

THE JET LAG WATCH®
$69.00
plus $4.95 shipping & handling
To order by Visa or Mastercard, call toll-free:
(800) 7-JETLAG
24 hours a day, 7 days a week
Or send check/money order to:
Acclimator Time Corporation
P.O. Box 151
Newtonville, MA 02160
(Mass. residents, add 5% Sales Tax)

It's a regular watch too

The Jet Lag Watch works as a normal watch when you are not traveling. It's as elegant as it is functional, with its genuine leather band, scratch-resistant crystal and gold-finished case. Standard functions on the watch's liquid crystal analog display include dual time zones, alarm, and a date display with leap year correction. Your Jet Lag Watch arrives handsomely boxed, accompanied by clear instructions for use. A perfect gift for yourself or any traveler, this unique watch is protected by a full one-year warranty and a thirty day unconditional return privilege.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Weigel writes also of Paul Blanshard, who told me hyperbolically in an interview around 1950 that he wrote *American Freedom and Catholic Power* with a fountain pen he had touched to a number of Roman Catholic relics. Like nuclear fuel, bigotry pollutes the environment long after it is ignited. But I do not think Norman Vincent Peale is a part of it.

A.E.P. WALL
Central Florida *Episcopalian*
Orlando, Florida

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Weigel's "The New Anti-Catholicism" fails to distinguish between anti-Catholicism and anticlericalism. Unlike Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues, there is a vast gap between Catholic clergy and laity. The laity provides the money; the bishops, in the name of the dioceses, own the assets, allocate the income, and make the rules. This undemocratic process has led to anticlericalism, which *in extremis* may merge with anti-Catholicism. At one time it became loud and clear and the result was the Protestant Reformation.

But the secularization of religion in the United States has not stopped at the vestibule of the Catholic Church. It is in the sanctuary. The occupation of priest is gradually being secularized or laicized. Already auricular confession is almost extinct, and the Mass and other sacraments are on the way to being laicized. It is not American democracy that will be "fundamentally transformed," as Mr. Weigel sees it, but the institutional Church. The overriding issue will be the use or disposition of the Church's vast financial resources. Anti-Catholicism disguises the real issue, anticlericalism.

ROBERT LYON
Temple University
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I was frankly astounded at the appearance of an unabashed special-pleading article whining at the unfairness of anti-Catholicism that, according to the author, is rampant in this nation.

I cannot for the life of me conceive the degree of disingenuousness that would allow this skewed view of Christianity's role in our national life to grace your pages.

Anti-Semitism, in case you've forgotten, is the creature, pure and simple, of Christianity in general and the Catholic Church in particular.

George Weigel may be entirely correct in his laundry list of gratuitous Catholic-bashing that makes its sporadic appearance from time to time, but, unlike anti-Semitism, it derives from political positions advocated by the Catholic Church that go against the grain of the American polity. This does not make it either more palatable or justifiable, but it needs to be factored into the discussion.

Indeed, I am left breathless by the sheer *chutzpah* of Mr. Weigel's bristling antipathy toward genuine objections to the Church's posture on a variety of "moral" issues. I am reminded of the man who expected judicial leniency after murdering his parents because he is now an orphan.

I submit that organizations which enter the political arena had better be prepared to fight their good fight in that bruising arena without crying "foul" every time they get a metaphorical smack in the kisser.

Mr. Weigel epitomizes a religious attitude that brings out the very worst in me—I want to sit on his chest and pound his churchly arrogance to a pulp. I am not only not a Christian, I sincerely believe that if Jesus should make an appearance today, he would not be one either. Specifically, I see nothing offensive in either John Adams's comments or George Washington's admonitions against religious intolerance. Both expressed significant insights, the one no more than a personal opinion, the other an admirable attitude. Mr. Weigel's tract is totally innocent of the slightest suggestion of the Church's role in spreading and abetting anti-Semitism. Compare and contrast the roles of Catholicism and Judaism in American life.

For instance, in contradistinction to Judaism, Christianity has embedded in its very foundation its superiority over not only secularity but all other religions as well and, as a corollary, decrees that all nations, all peoples, should be Christianized. Thus commanded by God, it has not the slightest hesitation to try to legislate churchly precepts into the law of the land. Not surprisingly, the American polity resents, and rightly so in my opinion, those who would impose laws against, for instance, birth control.

An overview of a few historical items is not out of place here, for instance the Church's role in resisting the advance of scientific inquiry (e.g., Galileo's ordeal) or its savage belligerence against Islam (e.g., the Crusades), against Jews (e.g., the European pogroms), its alignment with totalitarianism (e.g., Italy's fascist state), and its role in facilitating the escape of war criminals . . . after World War II.

Notwithstanding Mr. Weigel's lofty disclaimer that his concern is really creeping secularism, I think his concern is America's growing disdain of Catholicism's version of transcendence.

The crowning insult here is his equating anti-Catholicism with the presumed erosion of American democracy. I believe that what he perceives as anti-Catholicism is in truth the angry objections of various societal elements against the Church's pretensions to ultimate authority and its ambition to transmogrify American political reality to conform to its own dogma. . . .

LOUIS S. LYONS
Woodland Hills, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Weigel's article offers a disturbing collection of evidence that American hostility toward Roman Catholicism is alive and well. His assertion that traditional anti-Catholicism in the United States is deeply rooted in evangelical Protestantism and the fear of East European ethnics is accurate. Yet early liberal Protestants, Unitarians, and Transcendentalists, it should be noted, also shared such anti-Catholic fears. Neither am I at all convinced that a secular nativism did not flourish in 19th-century America, although, to be sure, because of its muted character, it was more difficult to identify than it is today, where it stands in conspicuous isolation.

Nevertheless, to attribute the entire blame for contemporary anti-Catholicism, or, for that matter, anti-Christianity in general, to the inroads made by secular humanism is to close Catholicism's eyes to the deep religious problems of its own world. Did it ever occur to Mr. Weigel that some of the fault may lie with the Church itself? Bluntly put, given the Church's history during the last half-century, is it possible any more to accept the moral credibility of the Roman Catholic Church? If

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Church speaks, why should anyone bother to listen? I am referring to such matters as the silence of the Roman Catholic Church during the Holocaust, its refusal to excommunicate Hitler and his Roman Catholic henchmen, its shameful efforts to save Nazi war criminals, its belated and anemic pronouncement on the question of deicide during the Second Vatican Council, its meetings with the terrorist leader Yasir Arafat and the Nazi Kurt Waldheim, its refusal to recognize the state of Israel or acknowledge Jerusalem as its capital. I mention here only a few of its deplorable activities, each of which can be described as nothing less than blatant anti-Judaism. They each raise serious questions about the Church's moral credibility and authority.

Any kind of bigotry is deplorable, including anti-Catholic bigotry. But to attribute the causes of anti-Catholicism solely to forces which lie outside of its own mansion and to refrain from peering into its own soul is hardly a productive exercise.

EGAL FELDMAN
University of Wisconsin
Superior, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Into the "naked public square," which has been described by Richard John Neuhaus as being devoid of values, come marching the Stalins and Hitlers of the New Age. But the "square" has not yet been emptied—Catholic institutions in America are the last viable national entity able to stand in the way of future tyrants.

Thus George Weigel's "The New Anti-Catholicism" represents a new level of defense against those who would smear a Church which stands for fidelity in marriage, chastity in sexual relations, and those values which enhance both individual worth and social well-being. . . .

ROBERT JOYCE
Rockaway Park, New York

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Anti-Catholicism may be an old bigotry, as George Weigel claims, but homophobia and anti-Semitism are far older and of a different order altogether. Homophobia and anti-Semitism involve the irrational hatred of certain people *because of who they are*. Anti-Catholicism is not a hostile predisposition toward a kind of person; it is more

You deserve a factual look at...

Loan Guarantees for Israel

Are they in the best interest of the United States?

Several months ago, there was much discussion whether loan guarantees in the amount of $10 billion should be granted to Israel for settlement of Soviet Jews. Because of disagreement on housing starts in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank"), it was decided to postpone the matter. Now, with a new government in Israel, understanding on this point has been reached and the loan guarantees have been granted. But still, we should ask ourselves: Are these loan guarantees good for the United States? Were we right in granting them?

What are the facts?

What is the purpose of the loan guarantees? For many years, it has been one of the major purposes of U.S. policy to persuade the former Soviet Union to allow free emigration of its citizens. Now that this lofty goal has finally been attained, the Jews of the country, its most endangered minority, have opted in large numbers to leave. A good number have chosen to come to the United States. The great majority have chosen Israel as their new homeland. So far, about 400,000 have come; a total of 1 million to 1.5 million are expected over the next five years.

"The loan guarantees will not cost us anything...they will be of great economic benefit to the United States."

Israel has a population of 4 or 5 million. The expected immigration is equivalent to an increase of 50–75 million in the United States—more than the population of our three or four most populous states. These people arrive virtually penniless in Israel. All have to be fed, clothed, housed, educated, jobs have to be found, and infrastructure has to be created to accommodate this huge influx. The United States can take great pride in being an active participant in this humanitarian endeavor.

What will the loan guarantees cost the United States? Misinformation about the loan guarantees abounds. Israel gets *guarantees*—not loans or grants from the United States. It is equivalent to co-signing a note for a friend. No money will be transferred to Israel from the U.S. Treasury. There will be some "scoring." But the ultimate cost to the United States will be zero.

In its 40-year history, Israel has never defaulted on a loan. The credit guarantees will not increase the U.S. deficit, nor will they affect domestic programs in any way. The United States routinely grants such loan guarantees. Iraq was granted a $5 billion guarantee just a few months before the outbreak of the Gulf War; about $600 billion in domestic guarantees and direct loans are expected to be granted by the U.S. within the next five years.

What's in it for the United States? The loan guarantees are essentially a humanitarian undertaking. But there will be substantial tangible benefits for the United States. Economic activity in Israel, as a result of this immigration, is projected to cause a surge of $170 billion in imports over the next five years, at least $30 billion of which is projected to be purchased in the United States. In addition, the U.S. taxpayer will benefit to the tune of several billion dollars from the servicing of the debt, most of which will be placed with U.S. banks. About 70% of the approximately 250,000 housing units required to shelter the immigrants will be purchased in the United States, at a cost of not less than $5 billion. All of this will create tens of thousands of new U.S. jobs.

Israel's record as a major non-Nato ally is unique in a world of uncertainty and shifting alliances. Our national interest is served in strengthening this ally and in assisting it in the absorption of what may be as many as a million new immigrants. These immigrants will further strengthen the only democracy in the Middle East—politically, economically and militarily, and thus make even more valuable this outpost of Western civilization in an area in which the United States has such a vital stake. The United States can take great credit for the exodus of Jews from the former Soviet Union to Israel. We have assumed the moral obligation to see that migration succeed. The loan guarantees will not cost us anything; on the contrary, they will be of great economic benefit to the United States.

This ad has been published and paid for by

FLAME
Facts and Logic about the Middle East
P.O. Box 590359 ■ San Francisco, CA 94159

FLAME is a tax-exempt, non-profit 501(c)(3)organization. Its purpose is the research and publication of the facts regarding developments in the Middle East and exposing false propaganda that might harm the interests of the United States and its allies in that area of the world. Your tax deductible contributions are welcome. They enable us to pursue these goals and to publish these messages in national newspapers and magazines. We have virtually no overhead. Almost all of our revenue pays for our educational work, for these clarifying messages, and for related direct mail.

Yes, I want to help in the publication of these ads and in clarifying the situation in the Middle East. I include my tax-deductible contribution in the amount of
$ _____ CM/40A

❑ My contribution is in the amount of $50 or more. Please send me your booklet containing 24 of the ads that you have published in national media over the last few years.

My name is _____

I live at _____

In _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to FLAME P.O. Box 590359 San Francisco, CA 94159

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

often than not an attitude toward the Church's hierarchy, dogma, or political power. Just ask Voltaire.

So-called "Catholic-bashing" (an amusing term) never takes the form of physical attacks on Catholics and rarely does it consist of ridiculing the religion's basic tenets. Gay-bashing and anti-Semitic acts, on the other hand, have resulted in the death and destruction of people and property. (Let it be remembered that Jews and homosexuals were singled out for extermination in Nazi death camps.)

Moreover, in contemporary America, Catholics are not routinely discriminated against in housing and employment as, for example, gay people are.

The "new" anti-Catholicism, as Mr. Weigel calls it, is not anti-religion or even anti-God, and has nothing to do with interfering with one's right to worship or the violation of any other rights, for that matter. It is simply a valid political response to the politicking of an institution that seeks to impose its morality on others. If Mr. Weigel would analyze his own data more carefully, he would discover that four out of the ten examples he provides of "anti-Catholic" acts are directed specifically against Cardinal John O'Connor, not an entire religion and its diverse adherents.

Why Cardinal O'Connor?

The Archbishop of New York City may be considered a spiritual leader by some, but for many others he is a politician who attempts to shape not only Church policy but public policy. When he vociferously spoke out against the gay-rights bill in New York City, helping to block its ratification for many years, he was acting as a politician. When he invited the militant anti-abortion group, Operation Rescue, into his church, he was acting as a politician. When he lobbies against safe-sex education in *public schools*—in direct opposition to sound public-health policy when HIV infection is skyrocketing among teenagers—he acts as a politician.

Cardinal O'Connor uses his tax-exempt pulpit to leap across the line which separates church and state.

It is one thing for the Church to preach its beliefs to its followers and institute policies in its own schools and organizations. It is another thing when it aggressively infringes on the civil liberties of certain groups outside its domain. If the Church and its leaders play political hardball in the *public* arena, they must expect a political reaction in kind. Such a response Mr. Weigel calls "anti-Catholicism."

Included on Mr. Weigel's list of grievances is my "anti-Catholic" film, *Stop the Church*, which was aired on several PBS stations. What he fails to mention is that my documentary (which won Best Documentary at the 1991 Ann Arbor Film Festival and a Certificate of Merit at the 1991 Chicago Film Festival) was supposed to have a national broadcast on the series *Point of View*—an appropriate venue—but was pulled two weeks before the scheduled air date. *Stop the Church* was censored.

Furthermore, Mr. Weigel leaves out the fact that Cardinal Roger Mahony of Los Angeles, in response to KCET's decision to show the film, held a press conference demanding that the people of Southern California boycott the station. So much for freedom of speech and the Catholic Church.

In addition to omitting these pertinent facts, Mr. Weigel goes on to distort the content of my film (I wonder if he even saw it). Contrary to what he claims, there is no desecration whatsoever of a communion wafer. Such an act has no place in civil discourse and is certainly not celebrated in my documentary. Demonstrators do indeed shout "bigot" and "murderer" indignantly at Cardinal O'Connor, but for the specific reasons stated earlier. Cardinal O'Connor has invited such a dramatic response by turning his cathedral's supposedly sacred interior into a political playground.

Stop the Church does not ridicule Catholics or their religion or their right to believe what they want to. The film criticizes the undeniable political activities of Cardinal O'Connor. And if there are instances of ridicule directed toward him, they are offered *satirically*, which is fair play, the American way. After all, he has made himself a public figure.

In conclusion, I would like to say that while Mr. Weigel fancies himself a guardian of civil discourse and pretends to be fair-minded, he deliberately falsifies history any chance he gets and employs weird logic to serve his own parochial, conservative agenda. His hokey journalism disregards the pluralism of the Church: the existence of liberal Catholics, gay and lesbian Catholics, Catholics who practice birth control, Catholics who are pro-choice, indeed, Catholics who want to *reform* the Church. He makes no mention of the hypocrisy of the clergy, where so many priests are homosexual (at least 40 percent, according to ex-Jesuit writer Andrew Greeley) and *practicing* homosexuality. He also displays his utter contempt for "gay rights," as if such a concept were absurd, unthinkable, illegitimate, and undeserving.

But that is not enough. In a ridiculous and absurd summation, Mr. Weigel stretches his shameless sophistry to the outer limits of reason: he opines that it is not the Church but gay rights and pro-choice advocates who are "anti-pluralistic" and wish to impose their values on others.

Look at the facts, Mr. Weigel. Examine *your* prejudices. These beleaguered people are merely fulfilling the project of democracy, to which you are so inimical.

ROBERT HILFERTY
New York City

GEORGE WEIGEL writes:

Let me begin my response to these letters by clarifying two terms and a point of history.

In my article, I did not mean to suggest that all "secularism" was of the militant sort espoused by Paul Blanshard in the 1950's and propagated by the cultured despisers of religion today. We all know "secular" people—people for whom biblical religion plays little or no serious role in their lives—who are tolerant, open-minded, decent-spirited friends, neighbors, and colleagues. They ask only that their moral insights be heard in the American public square, as indeed they should be. But these are not the ideological "secularists" who insist that biblical religion is inimical to democracy, and who are determined to establish their moral-philosophical self-understanding as normative for American public life. These latter are the "secularists" who threaten the American democratic experiment: precisely because they threaten to drive out of our public discourse the deepest moral convictions of at least four-fifths of their fellow citizens.

Then there is "pluralism." Pluralism is not just plurality. Pluralism, to my mind, is an achieve-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment, not simply a description of demographic reality. It is the achievement of genuinely public moral discourse, among people of diverse religious convictions, about the right ordering of our common life. Pluralism, rightly understood, does not mean the avoidance of our differences (as in the naked public square), but rather the engagement of our deepest differences within the bond of democratic civility. Genuine pluralism, in this sense, is never to be taken for granted. The new anti-Catholicism, like the new nativism and new eruptions of anti-Semitism, threatens the achievement of pluralism in our generation. That is something that should trouble all Americans, not just Catholics.

I hope this clarifies things a bit for Adolf Grünbaum, Michael David Blume, and Lawrence Hyman.

On the point of history raised by A.E.P. Wall: on September 7, 1960, a group styling itself the National Conference of Citizens for Religious Freedom met behind closed doors and then issued a statement which declared that the "religion issue" in the 1960 campaign was due to "the nature of the Roman Catholic Church which is, in a very real sense, both a church and a temporal state." The Church's hierarchy, according to the group, continued to make "determined efforts . . . to breach the wall of separation of church and state." The spokesman for the group was Norman Vincent Peale. Given the nature of the religious controversy at the time, and given Peale's longstanding involvement in Republican party politics, it was inconceivable that this statement could have been intended, or understood, as anything other than an assault on the Kennedy candidacy. The statement was denounced by prominent Protestant and Jewish theologians, and Peale's newspaper column was pulled by several papers. Peale then withdrew from what had become known as the "Peale Group," complaining about "distorted publicity." At the time, he expressed no disagreement with what the group had said or done, or any regret about its attack on the Catholic Church. He simply, as Theodore Sorensen noted, did not want anyone to know that he had had anything to do with it. Peale's subsequent remarks to Mr. Wall seem to fit that established pattern of bobbing-and-weaving.

Now, as for Louis Lyons, I am tempted to respond to his hyperventilations by simply saying "Q.E.D." On the other hand, perhaps he will permit me to suggest that he might wish to reflect on the centrality of the notions of election and chosenness to Jewish self-understanding. I would argue, and as a Christian, that these theological concepts, and the notions of moral obligation that flow from them, do not impede, but rather enhance, Jewish participation in the American democratic experiment. Will Mr. Lyons not permit as much, analogously, to Catholics and their convictions?

Egal Feldman wonders ("bluntly") whether it is possible, anymore, to accept the moral credibility of the Roman Catholic Church. Bluntly put, Mr. Feldman, about 900 million human beings, many of whom have reflected carefully on the failures of their Church at various moments in its history, accept the moral credibility of the Roman Catholic Church. Are we to regard these 900 million men and women as moral cretins? Mr. Feldman also asks why anybody should listen to the Church. At the risk of invidious comparisons, one can imagine the same question being asked, smugly, in the Kremlin when a hitherto obscure Polish archbishop was elected bishop of Rome in 1978.

Finally, there is Robert Hilferty, a very angry man. I did see his film, *Stop the Church*, and I described it on the op-ed page of the Los Angeles *Times* as "trash, and anti-democratic trash at that." Mr. Hilferty's letter confirms that description. He misrepresents the facts about HIV infection among teenagers. He misrepresents Cardinal Mahony's response to the decision of public television station KCET to broadcast *Stop the Church*. He wants to censor Cardinal O'Connor, and in the Cardinal's own pulpit, no less. Mr. Hilferty can't even get the facts straight about his own film, which mocks the central act of Catholic worship, the Mass, and various forms of Catholic piety, like the rosary, as absurdly medieval superstitions by which Catholics are anesthetized against human suffering. If this is what passes for excellence in Ann Arbor, then so much the worse for Ann Arbor.

Those of us who have been writing, from time to time, about the "culture war" in American society have sometimes wondered, to ourselves, if we have not been engaging in hyperbole. Much of the material in these letters, alas, suggests otherwise.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If you knew what they know, would you do what they do?

More than any other single force on earth, America's foreign policy will determine what kind of world we and our children live in.

And every one of us can influence that policy. That's what the nonprofit, nonpartisan Foreign Policy Association is all about: working to develop the kind of informed public opinion that will help our government make enlightened, responsible foreign policy decisions.

Last year alone, more than 250,000 Americans across the nation—in discussion groups, classrooms and community centers—participated in our *Great Decisions* program.

The *Great Decisions* book provides objective background on eight key foreign policy issues. Discussions help you form your views; you express them on opinion ballots, which FPA presents to Washington officials.

FOREIGN POLICY ASSOCIATION 1918

To find out more, call us now at (212) 764-4050. Or write to Foreign Policy Association, Department A, 729 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019. Donations are tax deductible.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bush, Clinton & the Jews

A Debate

Daniel Pipes/Martin Peretz

Last month, we presented a debate between a supporter of Bill Clinton (Richard Schifter) and a supporter of George Bush (Thomas Sowell) on the question of whether the Democratic party has now freed itself from the leftist forces whose accession to power in 1972 drove away many traditionally Democratic voters. Among these voters were the intellectuals who came to be called the neoconservatives and the ethnic groups from whose ranks were drawn what came to be known as the Reagan Democrats. The Schifter-Sowell debate focused mainly on the issues which concerned these two groups.

Now, continuing our discussion of this year's presidential campaign, we shift the focus to another ethnic group which was disaffected (though to a lesser extent) by the leftward drift of the Democratic party—the American Jewish community.

Having in previous years been almost entirely committed to the Democratic camp, Jews in 1972 began voting in relatively substantial numbers (between 30 and 40 percent) for Republican presidential candidates. In 1992, however, the Jewish vote for George Bush is widely expected to fall from this level, and perhaps even to resume its pre-1972 pattern of overwhelming support for the Democratic candidate. The main reason is that the President and former Secretary of State James A. Baker 3d are perceived by many Jews as hostile to Israel.

According to DANIEL PIPES, *director of the Foreign Policy Research Institute and its Middle East Council, this perception is belied by the actual record of the Bush administration, while a Clinton administration is in his judgment likely to fall under the influence of forces truly hostile to Israel. On the contrary, says* MARTIN PERETZ, *editor-in-chief of the* New Republic, *the perception of hostility to Israel is fully justified by the Bush administration's record; he expects an administration headed by Bill Clinton and Al Gore to be as friendly to Israel as Israel's most ardent friends could wish.*

Daniel Pipes: If there is agreement on anything this election year, it is that friends of Israel should not vote for George Bush. The mere mention of his name in Jewish circles evokes strong disappointment, even anger.

This reaction is unjustified. While there have been tensions over the past four years, a close review of the Bush record reveals a complex but consistent pattern of getting the tone all wrong but doing the right things. More: on the basis of its history, there is reason to expect that the Bush administration will do better for Israel over the next four years than the seemingly attractive but actually quite alarming prospect of a President Clinton.

THE many unpleasantries during the past year have all involved words, not acts. Several of them resulted from Israel's request for a $10-billion loan guarantee to build new housing, the issue which riled U.S.-Israel relations for a full year. Most memorably, it prompted the President's appalling comments of September 1991, when he spoke of himself as "one lonely little guy down here" and referred to his being "up against some powerful political forces." The same tensions also explain former Secretary of State James Baker's alleged vulgarism ("F—— the Jews"). Clearly, Bush and Baker felt as much exasperation over the loan-guarantee issue as did Jewish leaders.

But not all problems resulted from the loan-guarantee issue. Twice in recent months the State Department initiated gratuitous and nasty efforts harmful to Israel, leaking a false report to the effect that Israel had transferred American arms to China; and endorsing (out of absolutely nowhere) a Palestinian right of return. Even for those favorably disposed to Bush, it felt at moments like U.S.-Israel relations had dropped to their lowest point since the 1950's.

Nevertheless, the administration's actions contradicted this impression.

Start with Operation Desert Storm. The war on

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Iraq not only destroyed the offensive capabilities (tanks, missiles, chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons, etc.) of Israel's second most dangerous enemy, but it assured that Iraq would not threaten other states again so long as Saddam Hussein remains in power. Diplomatically, the U.S. government put together a *de facto* coalition between Israel and Saudi Arabia which lasted through all the ups and downs of the Kuwait crisis, then held firm even after fighting ended (as Prince Bandar proved when he turned up at the Madrid peace conference).

The war also vastly enhanced the U.S. government's reputation in the Middle East. Building on this new stature, Baker devoted himself to launching an Arab-Israeli peace process which imposed not a single precondition on Israel. More impressive yet, he pressured the Arabs to accept virtually every condition of the Likud government.

Thus: points of reference for the talks contained nothing about Jerusalem or about land for peace. Palestinians had no choice but to be folded into the Jordanian delegation. The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Palestinian expatriates, and even Palestinian residents of Jerusalem could not participate. European states and the United Nations came not as participants but as observers. The U.S. government promised not to involve itself directly in the bilateral negotiations unless asked to join by both Israel and its Arab interlocutor.

In a word, Baker put together Israel's dream negotiations, the ones it had sought since 1948.

BUSH and Baker helped Israel in a variety of other ways, too. In 1985, as Vice President, Bush had played a personal role in "Operation Joshua," the airlift which brought 10,000 Jews out of Ethiopia. Then, again in 1991, when Bush was President, American help played a critical role in "Operation Solomon," the escape of 14,000 more Ethiopian Jews. Baker devoted surprisingly large amounts of his time with Hafez al-Assad to the subject of Syrian Jews; the reward came earlier this year, when Damascus began permitting them to leave. On a smaller scale, American good offices helped in getting Jews out of Yemen. Most dramatically, Bush got the United Nations to rescind its 1975 "Zionism is Racism" resolution, something that Ronald Reagan never even attempted.

The State Department, not known for pro-Israel attitudes, significantly improved under James Baker, as two examples from the past year indicated. First, when the Syrians made their attendance at a Turkish-sponsored meeting on water resources conditional on Israel's not being present, Foggy Bottom made U.S. attendance conditional on Israel's being present. (As a result, the meeting was cancelled.) Second, American diplomats worked behind the scenes to help Israel expand its international ties, an effort which culminated earlier this year in the establishment of official relations between Jerusalem and both China and India in the space of a single week.

Less publicly, strategic cooperation between the U.S. and Israel has evolved from an abstraction to a military reality during the last four years. It now includes the pre-positioning of American materiel in Israel, American purchases of some $300-500 million a year in military equipment from Israel, combined military exercises, and joint development of the Arrow anti-missile program. The two sides also installed a military hotline during Desert Storm. And there may be more that is not visible: according to the Washington *Post*, what is publicly portrayed as merely the pre-positioning of American equipment in Israel actually constitutes a loan to Israel "for military research and development."

Thanks in large part to American actions, Israel today faces fewer threats of war than at any time in its history. Only Syria is in a position to initiate an attack on Israel, and it is very unlikely to do so while participating in American-sponsored peace talks.

As for the loan-guarantee imbroglio, it sorely needs to be seen in perspective. The conflict was not as bad as it appeared, for the following reasons:

- Israel's survival has always been the central issue in U.S.-Israel relations; in this light, the loan guarantee was tangential, a minor concern compared to the tensions in past years (as when Dwight D. Eisenhower forced Israel out of Sinai, Gerald Ford denied the delivery of fighter planes, and Jimmy Carter ignored Egyptian treaty violations).
- Washington never refused to make the loan guarantee, but conditioned it on a cessation of new Jewish settlement activities in the West Bank. The Shamir government rejected these terms. The Rabin government accepted them and got the administration's approval for the money. In the end it was Israelis who decided whether or not they would accept American terms, and not the reverse.
- The administration can hardly be accused of penny-pinching with respect to Israel, or of adding unreasonable conditions. Every year, it unconditionally supported $3 billion in aid to Israel, much the highest per-capita aid to any country. In 1991 it also backed a $400-million supplement for housing and $650 million in cash for damages suffered during the Gulf war.

All this said, doing *without* the loan guarantee probably would have served Israel's long-term interests. To absorb immigrants, the country needs growth, not aid. Yet by permitting Israeli politicians to defer the hard decisions, American handouts permit Israel's dinosaur socialist institutions to limp along. The prospect of no loan guarantee compelled the Israeli government to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

get serious about economic reforms, privatization in particular. Conversely, its granting may have unfortunate consequences. For example, those major corporations on the block for privatization—the telephone exchange, the state chemical manufacturer, the state shipping line—may now remain under government control.

Israelis themselves, in a development with far-reaching implications, increasingly doubt the value of aid. Just a year ago this view was restricted to a small band of believers in the free market; now it echoes from all parts of the political spectrum.* For example, David Boaz, a former state budget director, has openly aired his fears that the loan guarantee might foster an "easy money" atmosphere which could result in an expansion of government funding and subsidies. The economics editor of the daily paper, *Yediot Achronot*, has worried that it might turn into "a kind of opium"; feeling $10 billion richer, the government could allow difficult reforms to go unimplemented. An economic correspondent for another daily, *Ha'aretz*, has suggested that "now that we have [the funds], I don't think we should use them. It will cause more harm than good to the Israeli economy."

While it was not for Israel's benefit that the Bush administration withheld the loan guarantee, this was the inadvertent effect.

If the Bush administration has done so much good for Israel, why do Israel's supporters not give it credit? The answer in part has to do with George Bush's own inconsistencies. But it mostly results from his style. Appreciating the importance of style in U.S.-Israel relations requires an understanding of the uniqueness of this bilateral tie, so I will take up this topic before moving on to the matter of Bill Clinton and the Democratic party.

U.S.-Israel ties are the family relationship of international politics—more intimate, more intense, and more interfering than any other. As already noted, per capita, the U.S. government gives by far the largest amounts of aid to Israel; correlatively, Jerusalem votes Washington's way at the United Nations 88 percent of the time, substantially more often than does any other state. The first free-trade zone in American history came into existence in 1985 with Israel; only later did the second come into existence with Canada (the third, with Mexico, is now being debated). And of all the ambassadors in Washington, Israel's consistently enjoys the best access to the Oval Office.†

As in a family, each side baldly interferes in the other's business. Israelis effectively exploit their influence with Congress and with the American Jewish community. By the same token, leading American figures call on their government to "save Israel in spite of herself" (a phrase made famous by George Ball) and the White House transparently provokes elections in Israel, always favoring Labor over Likud. Washington pressures Israel not only on external issues but also on domestic ones, such as its economic structures.

So routine is American intrusion that Israelis have come to accept it and no longer even express resentment. In July 1989, for instance, as the Bush administration pressured Labor to stay in a coalition government with Likud, an Israeli official commented that "because of the intensity of the relationship between our two countries, we have gotten used to such intervention and do not see it as meddling." What other foreign government would say this?

The involvement goes beyond governments. American Jews have interceded in Israel's domestic politics, most memorably in 1988, when one American faction (the Lubavitcher Hasidim) instigated a tightening of Israel's who-is-a-Jew regulations, only to be foiled by the intervention of other (non-Orthodox) American factions. More American journalists live in Israel than in any other foreign country except the United Kingdom. (And many London-based correspondents cover the Continent, too, whereas those in Israel rarely leave the country.) Though Israel exports no petroleum, oil companies pay it enormous attention. Israel is the only country to which tens of millions of Americans (eschatologically-minded Christians) look for portents of Judgment Day.

For their part, Israelis look to the United States for nearly everything: popular culture, intellectual fashions, United Nations vetoes, and military support. New York fads hit Tel Aviv before reaching many parts of the United States. And the relationship is literally family; many Israelis have relatives in the United States.

Unlike other diplomatic bonds, which pivot on such factors as trade and security interests, the U.S.-Israel relationship has an emotional base. Feelings, not a cool assessment of interests, drive its every aspect. Tone, style, mood, and perception often matter more than hard facts. Hence an issue like the loan guarantee gets freighted with a significance far greater than the practical issues involved. This also explains why American Jews seek out politicians who personally identify with Israel and show their concern for Israel's long-term security. George Bush is not one of these: he does not treat Israel like family. He and Baker retain the kind of stiffness appropriate to conventional diplomacy but alien to this special bond.

---

* The following quotes come from the *Wall Street Journal*, August 13, 1992.

† And not just ambassadors and not just the Oval Office. President Lyndon B. Johnson struck up a friendship with Ephraim Evron, then the number-two diplomat in Israel's embassy, unique in the annals of diplomacy. Johnson consulted privately with Evron and sometimes invited him to the Texas ranch for a weekend.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN CONTRAST, Ronald Reagan's Secretary of State, George Shultz, fully understood the bond. Hence, when addressing the annual conference of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) in 1987, he departed from his written text to ask this large and avidly pro-Israel audience if it thought the PLO was qualified to enter negotiations with Israel. "No," it boomed back. Shultz answered: "Hell, no! Let's try that on for size. PLO?" "Hell, no!" the crowd echoed. "You got it!" the Secretary of State replied.

Not surprisingly, Shultz's rapport won him the permanent affection of Israel's supporters. But style is not substance, as Shultz proved just a year later when he opened official U.S. relations with the PLO. Though most friends of Israel dreaded this step, they raised hardly a word of protest. Pro-Israel credentials gave Shultz virtual freedom of action.*

Conversely, when Bush and Baker closed down Shultz's dialogue with the PLO, they won very little gratitude from American Jews. They improved in other ways as well on Shultz's policies—his peace process meant just Israelis and Palestinians, theirs included no fewer than eleven Arab states—yet they earned few credits from American Jews. Thanks to Bush's tin ear and Baker's verbal reticence, they could do nothing right in American-Jewish eyes. Harsh words got endlessly repeated, while friendly acts immediately got discounted.

Arabs, it is worth noting, have not fallen into this trap. Unmoved by the emotional dimension of U.S.-Israel relations, they tend to ignore Washington's tough-sounding tone, and instead dwell on a few key facts: Israel won peace negotiations on its terms, the U.S. government did finally approve the $10-billion loan guarantee, and President Bush reconfirmed his opposition to a Palestinian state. Worse, Bush staged war against one Arab state (Iraq) and imposed sanctions on another (Libya). A newspaper cartoon last April captured the prevailing Arab view: Uncle Sam salutes Yitzhak Shamir and reports: "We've blockaded Libya, whom would you like next?"

In an unusual acknowledgment of the emotional basis of U.S.-Israel ties, President Bush recently observed:

> I have come to believe that the measure of a good relationship is not the ability to agree, but rather the ability to disagree on specifics without placing fundamentals at risk. We do this all the time with Britain; we should manage to do it with Israel.

The President concluded by noting that "historians will look at today's controversy and wonder what much of the fuss was about." He was right: Israel's supporters need to go beyond tone and style and recognize a positive record for what it is.

Simultaneously, Bush and Baker need to understand the critical role of feelings in U.S.-Israel relations—and there is some evidence that they have finally gotten the message. Indeed, Bush's remarks after hosting Yitzhak Rabin at his Kennebunkport summer house showed a new level of warmth. The U.S.-Israel relationship is, the President said,

> based on a shared commitment to democracy and to common values, as well as the solid commitment to Israel's security, including its qualitative military edge. This is a special relationship. It is one that is built to endure.

Looking to the future, Bush promised neither to "impose our preferences on Israel" nor to link aid to policy questions.

If this tone is maintained, U.S.-Israel relations will prosper mightily during a second Bush administration; but even if it is not, the past four years give plenty of reason to expect things to turn out well.

WHAT about Bill Clinton? He has no record to judge from but he does have a fully articulated set of policies and they are certainly friendly to Israel. He opposes the creation of an independent Palestinian state, recognizes the value of Israel's 1981 strike on Iraq's nuclear reactor, and pays homage to the "genius of the people" of Israel. "A Clinton-Gore administration," his campaign literature assures us, "will never let Israel down."†

In a word, Clinton does understand the need for warmth toward Israel, and it wins him strong support. The *Forward*, a Jewish weekly, prefers Clinton on the grounds that he and the Democrats "have managed to articulate . . . a more impassioned sense than the Republicans of Israel's moral *raison d'être*." George Bush, who does not articulate an impassioned sense about anything at all, simply cannot compete on this level.

But, of course, it is not the crucial level. Clinton just might follow Shultz in establishing a strong rapport, and then exploit the consequent freedom of action to bludgeon Israel. Or, like Joe Clark of Canada in 1979, he might ditch his pro-Israel campaign promises soon after the election.** No one can predict how Clinton will act,

---

* They also won him a warm afterglow. Though now remembered as a high point in U.S.-Israel relations, the Shultz years contained plenty of strain and heartache, including the reaction to Israel's siege of Beirut, the Reagan Plan, the F-15 sales to Saudi Arabia, and State Department references to Jerusalem as "occupied territory."

† Al Gore is also strongly pro-Israel, but not more than Dan Quayle, making the vice-presidential race a wash on this score.

** As the Progressive Conservative party candidate for Prime Minister, Clark promised to move the Canadian embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. But shortly after his election, he reneged on that promise. The Canadian embassy remains yet in Tel Aviv.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

but we do have some idea about the forces swirling around him in the Democratic party, and they inspire little confidence about policy toward Israel.

During the Jewish state's first twenty years, Democrats supported Israel far more than did Republicans. But in the wake of Vietnam and the Six-Day War of 1967, powerful elements in the Democratic party began characterizing Israel as the Palestinians' oppressor and as a tool of the U.S. government. The revulsion of many Democrats toward military spending, foreign arms sales, and the use of force also made them less than stalwart friends of Israel. In personal terms, Harry Truman gave way to George McGovern, Henry Jackson to Jesse Jackson, and Martin Luther King, Jr. to Andrew Young. The heroic Clark Clifford of 1948, who urged American recognition and support of Israel, became a bagman for (the anti-Israel) BCCI in 1988.

Hillary Rodham Clinton exemplifies the new mindset. Although primarily concerned with domestic issues, during the time she served as both a director and the chairman of the board of directors of the New World Foundation, that organization made a $15,000 grant to Grassroots International which the latter passed on to the Union of Palestinian Working Women's Committees and the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees. *Insight* magazine has reported that both these organizations fall under the supervision of the Palestine People's Party, a Communist faction associated with the PLO. The sum of money is small, but it unambiguously proclaims a state of mind.

Republicans also changed in the post-Vietnam period, but in the opposite direction. They came to appreciate Israel as a staunch ally in a critical region. The oil perspective lost influence as big-business interests in the party gave way to a free-market approach. The Republican evolution is neatly symbolized by Senator Jesse Helms's complete change of heart about Israel. In August 1982, as the Israelis were besieging Beirut, he called for "shutting down" relations with Israel. Less than two years later, in June 1984, he called for the U.S. embassy to be moved from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

More broadly, William F. Buckley, Jr.'s public soul-searching on the question of conservative anti-Semitism evoked little response among his Democratic counterparts on the far more worrisome phenomenon of left-wing anti-Semitism. Rogue elements also brought out the parties' differences. Despite his foul statements about Jews and Israel, Congressman Gus Savage prompted no denunciations in the Democratic party. But Republicans strongly repudiated David Duke.

In sum, a fundamental shift of attitudes has taken place in the two parties, with the Republicans emerging as the champion of Jewish interests, including Israel. This Republican move toward a pro-Israel stand represents an evolving long-term commitment. Though far from unanimous, the direction is clear. The Democratic position, in contrast, shifts opportunistically. At this moment, to be sure, forces friendly to Israel within the Democratic party can out-muscle the opposition. But watch out: just as soon as isolationist impulses grow stronger or Arab-Americans become better organized, the pro-Israel stand is likely to evaporate as quickly as ice on a summer afternoon in the Negev.

Martin Peretz: The Republicans have charged Hillary Rodham Clinton with many (mostly vague) transgressions against public morals, and they have also accused her of another, more specific, transgression which they believe will be particularly alarming to Jews: she is said to have trafficked with terrorists.

The gravamen of the case is this: while Mrs. Clinton served as chairman of the New World Foundation, that charitable endowment donated $15,000 to Grassroots International, an *ad hoc*, Boston-based bank for various leftist causes—including, it will surprise no one, Palestinian Arab organizations affiliated with the PLO. If the names of these organizations—the Union of Palestinian Working Women's Committees and the Union of Palestinian Medical Relief Committees—evoke the image of front groups, that is exactly what they are. Or, to be more precise, they are instrumentalities of the (Communist) Palestine People's Party, a faction of the PLO.

I myself would not have given Grassroots a dime. Ditto for the National Lawyers Guild, William Kunstler's Center for Constitutional Rights, or the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador (CISPES)—all on the list of New World grantees. And although the chair does not vote on grants except to break a tie, I guess I do wonder how Mrs. Clinton feels about these successful supplicants for New World's largess. But, then, the foundation's charter also states an interest in the "relationship between the seen and the unseen."

MAYBE Mrs. Clinton should not have joined New World's board. Off the board, though, she would have had no warrant to aim its assets at problems of teaching disadvantaged children, her major concern at the foundation. With its help, by the way, she launched in rural Arkansas an innovative remedial-learning project called Home Instruction Programs for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Preschool Youngsters, otherwise known as Hippy. An import from abroad, Hippy comes direct from the education and social-work faculties of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which is where Hillary Clinton first met up with the venture.

Of course it was not New World's grant to Hippy which made ink in the *Wall Street Journal*, the New York *Post*, the Washington *Times*, the *Forward*, etc. It was, rather, the Grassroots grant and what that grant was supposed to tell us about Mrs. Clinton—and, by inference, what it portends about Mr. Clinton. Here is what one GOP flak had to say: "When President Reagan and Vice President Bush were working to deny Yasir Arafat a visa to come to this country, Hillary Clinton was working to fund a PLO organization. When the blood of American lives was fresh on Arafat's hands, Hillary Clinton worked to put American money into his hands."

This is a hysterical effort to compensate for George Bush's shabby record on Israel. Still, it does suggest some comparisons, beyond that between a sitting President and the wife of his opponent. I would like to know, for example, how Grassroots' Palestinian friends differ from the West Bank and Gaza groups supported by the U.S.-government Agency for International Development through its chosen network of private voluntary organizations. I would bet one thing: the women helped by these organizations with U.S. tax dollars do not stay home to bake cookies.

But there are more apt comparisons, and one of these would be between George Bush's record on Israel and that of his predecessor. Ronald Reagan was not an especially subtle man and certain nuances no doubt eluded him. But he did understand the drama of history, and not only because he could imagine it on celluloid. This understanding is one reason why Reagan grasped that there was an evil empire and that it was worth a colossal effort to bring the saga of its cruel rule to an end. Such deep intuitive feelings are alien to Bush, a cold man with a cold heart. And even though he has the temerity to claim credit for the collapse of one Communist system (which, at the end, hoping against hope, he actually tried to prop up), he is still in personal and policy solidarity with the other such system and its aging despots.

Let us face it: Bush identifies with those in power. He has never encountered a central government he would not prefer to something messy and strange. This preference goes far to explain why, when their tottering artifice was already apparent to everyone else, the President was still muttering about the "territorial integrity" of Iraq and Yugoslavia. With these mindless mutterings he encouraged Saddam Hussein's Baath party and the Belgrade Serbs to think that we would avert our eyes as they perpetrated the horrors to which they were inclined. And thus we did, until the horrors were so awful that we could no longer do so. By the time we noticed, however, it was too late for the Bosnians. As for the recent U.S. decision to provide some protection for that fragment of Iraq's Shi'a majority living in the marshes, that had to wait for permission from the Saudis. (Bush does nothing in the region without the assent of Prince Bandar.) The President must hope that this dispensation has not come too late to help his reelection campaign.

The desire to help his own campaign is also what motivated Bush's sudden discovery this past August that Israel is a strategic ally, after all. The same pressing concern also led him not to scrutinize too closely Yitzhak Rabin's building plans in the territories and, more significantly, given the President's previous obsessions, in greater Jerusalem. But, if he wins in November, his forbearance is not likely to last much past the end of the month.

THE fact is that, unlike Reagan, Bush has no special feel for Israel, either for the circumstances which made it a necessity for the Jewish people or for those which continue to imperil it. That is to say, he has a sense neither of the millennial dream nor of the millennial fears. One may wish, as I do, for Jewish national normality. But the perfervid hatreds which the Jewish nation and its state provoke among Arabs, both Muslim and Christian, indicate that this normality has been far from achieved. These are matters on which Reagan needed no lessons, and he was never lured by the great and distorting falsification of our time that all sides in all contests are morally equivalent.

Indeed, Bush, not one to be emotionally enmeshed in the competing claims for justice in any other national or ethnic conflict—actually, not one to be enmeshed in anyone's claims to justice—has been unusually alert to the claims of the Arabs in this dispute. And indifferent to Jewish claims. Already in 1971, when there was barely a handful of settlements in the territories, and scarcely more settlers, Bush was speaking of them as if they were a greater threat to peace than the Arab revanche which had fueled the Six-Day War only four years earlier. The settlements, it turns out, are for Bush nothing less than an *idée fixe*. His old friend, Senator Phil Gramm of Texas, testified earlier this year that he has "known George Bush for 25 years and there is no subject he feels more adamant about than settlements." It is a strange passion for someone whose entire career has been virtually without any hint of conviction. But not, I suppose, if that someone is temperamentally disposed to be churlish toward Israel—which, on the record, Bush surely is.

This was already noticeable when the Iran-*contra* controversy burst into our politics in the late 1980's. George Bush was the single most notable figure in the Reagan administration fingering Israel, on very flimsy evidence, as the critical

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and self-serving catalyst in that ill-fated enterprise, as if a great power bent on a very complex transaction would suborn its own interests to the concerns of a dependent client. Bush did this fingering in public and he did it in private, drawn reflexively to blame Israel first, perhaps in order to disguise what we have since learned to be the case: that he was no less enthusiastic about the escapade than those who have thus far taken the rap for it.

Even before Iran-*contra*, in 1982, during the Lebanon war, the then-Vice President caviled against Israel so relentlessly that the most guarded officials in our government would report his no-matter-what fault-finding. Now, Bush is not some delicate soul easily offended by the use of force. After all, by the end of the decade as President he would channel (and have his underlings lie about channeling) cash, arms, and other technologies of death to someone he would soon and rightly call a Hitler. Here is something truly worth the investigation of a special prosecutor.

If you want the real comparative measure of Reagan and Bush vis-à-vis Israel you have only to look at whom they chose as their Secretaries of State. Reagan appointed, first, Alexander Haig and, second, George Shultz. They were men of different dispositions and different gifts, but both understood that the real question in the Middle East was not whether Israel would give land for peace but whether the Arabs, separately and together, would (or could) give peace for land. Bush, by contrast, appointed his old pal James Baker to the post, putting the White House in perpetual perfect accord with Foggy Bottom. Israel, moreover, was at the top of the President's foreign-policy agenda, and at the top of the Secretary's, too. Not since James Forrestal was Secretary of Defense has there been someone in a Cabinet position whose views on the Jewish national restoration were so much an extension of his views on Jews generally. This is the James Baker, it is urgent to recall, of "f—— the Jews" fame and other no less believable similar epithets and outbursts.

The proof is in the policy, and the unfriendly policy cannot be explained by the usual exculpations. Yes, it is true: Yitzhak Shamir was an obstinate man, small in vision, blunt to the point of oafishness, not deferential. He must be immensely irritating. Once, at a press breakfast, after I had asked him why the government of Israel had put through yet *another* (that is, redundant) law on Jerusalem, he came up to me and pressed his stubby index finger into my thorax: "From you, too, I need such questions?" Still, no one has yet contended that had Israel's Likud policies been presented by Moshe Arens, a very courteous man, or by Benjamin Netanyahu, as smooth as Shamir is loutish, the Secretary's attitude to Israel would have been at all different.

In any case, Baker's exquisite tolerance for Saddam Hussein (up until August 1, 1990), and for Hafez al-Assad till this very day, cannot be justified by how civilized they are, for they are not civilized. Or by how cheap a deal can be struck with them. With Saddam Hussein, it turned out, no deal could be struck at all, while for sending some men wearing uniforms to the Gulf, Assad received Lebanon, *tout court*. But we already know that the only people whose self-determination carries any valence with this administration are the people of whom we would never have heard had they not entered history—and then only the day before yesterday—as enemies of the Jews. One might even speculate whether the Palestinians would have excited so much as a flicker of interest in James Baker's cool mind were it not for their unhappy begetting by Zionism. (As the old joke has it, Zionism was the creation of one people and the creator of another.)

In America we introduce foreign policy through calculated but plausibly deniable indiscretions, usually by second-echelon people or by unnamed senior officials. On the Middle East, such indiscretions have been legion during the Bush-Baker tenure. There was, for example, the revival—oh so casual, at a daily press briefing—of the "right of return" of Palestinian refugees. Was this really U.S. policy or was it "merely" a ploy to put pressure on Israel?

Nor was this the only gesture the administration made toward the Arabs which the Arabs have taken as a promise. It is perfectly clear, for instance, what the administration means by "land for peace" when it speaks of the Golan Heights: it means that Israel should hand them over to Syria. And as for the West Bank, since Jordan no longer claims it and the Republican platform avers that the Bush-Baker team opposes a Palestinian state, what exactly is the sovereignty to which the administration is seeking to return every inch of these territories, no doubt suitably "cleansed" of Jews? And why?

This team's map of the occupied territories also explicitly includes East Jerusalem, in which there now live, in a handful of densely-inhabited neighborhoods, some 150,000 Jews. Is the administration signaling that these Israelis are to plan a move to Tel Aviv, or that they will live under some jurisdiction other than Israel? Or does it envision serpentine frontiers following the alleys and lanes of the city, cutting Jewish Jerusalem from its heart? This is very explosive material indeed, and it will not do to assume that its handlers do not understand it. They do, as they understand the effect of every escalation in their criticisms of Israel for actions that go altogether unnoticed when committed by less faithful allies.

For the moment, the Bush-Baker administration has ceased its criticisms of Israel. But the serenity of Yitzhak Rabin's visit to Kennebunkport and of the period immediately

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

following derives from the fact that Israel's new Labor government gave Washington all it could prudently exact in the midst of a heated campaign. For its part, Labor forswore asking for anything beyond the loan guarantee. It knew that the cartography in the heads of Bush-Baker was essentially that of 1967. No reason to incite a breach when new actors may be less committed to the old lines, and also less invested in the peace process as presently configured.

In short, it cannot be denied that James Baker has had his way, extracting many laden concessions from Israel without wresting so much as one concession from any of the Arab parties. Yes, there will have to be some give among the Arabs. But in the latest round of talks the starting point for the Israelis has been not where they were but where they had been made to come by Baker. He does not even pretend to be evenhanded.

Robert W. Tucker recently observed in the *New Republic* that "one year after the end of the Gulf war, the American government was intent on removing from power the governments of Iraq, Libya, and Israel." In the case of the first two countries, it is not clear exactly how committed the Secretary of State was to this goal. But he certainly threw himself into the struggle against the government of the third. There is, indeed, something supremely ironic in the enthusiasm of a U.S. Secretary of State for the unseating of a democratically elected government—I say this even though it is my view that Israel is finally more secure under Rabin than under Shamir.

With Baker, or for that matter with his boss, a democratic society seems to have no more moral authority than a despotism. Although both John Foster Dulles and Jimmy Carter managed to maintain a certain neutrality between dictators and democrats (especially when the democrats, as in the instance of Israel, were Jews), walking a *via media* between accountable government and tyranny is a relatively new departure from American habits. In this, George Bush and James Baker are out of sync not only with the American mainstream but with the mainstream of their own party. This is not how Dan Quayle feels about Israel, or how Jack Kemp, William Weld, William J. Bennett, or even Dick Cheney feel about it, either, just to cite those already mentioned by the great mentioner for 1996. But these gentlemen will not be running American foreign policy if Bush is reelected; Bush and Baker will.

And that is not all they will be running in tandem. From all accounts it seems that George Bush wants James Baker to serve as his co-President on everything. This is not a happy choice. Baker's managerial skills will not suffice when public policy requires choosing real norms and real values in education, in science, in health care, in the structures of work and welfare. Baker's instincts are all wrong, as can be seen by the moral and political disaster of the Republic convention, the first great spectacle under his tutelage.

It is not only the multiculturalists and diversity-mongers who would welcome a *Kulturkampf* in America; Jim Baker apparently would, too. He has no compunctions about using God as a mantra, at drawing lines betwen "us" and "them." At the convention, Baker's lead-off point man was Pat Buchanan, who seemed to want to import ethnic cleansing from Bosnia. Now, it is true that this time Buchanan left the Jews out of his harangue, focusing instead on feminists and homosexuals, and it is also true that his critics rightly responded to the themes he exploited in Houston. But it should not go unnoticed that on the opening night of the convention the Baker management agency put forward as one of its stars a certified anti-Semite. In Baker's world, which is also Bush's, anti-Semitism disqualifies one from nothing.

A wise old wag was once asked whether Bush was anti-Semitic. "No," he said, "just allergic." I do not really know what lurks in his heart, but all of us can see who lives in the political universe he has constructed. It is not one in which Jews are welcome. Probably not since Herbert Hoover has there been an administration with so few Jews at or near the top. It is already two generations since a Jew sat on the Supreme Court. I am not arguing for affirmative action for Jews: meritocracy will have its day once more. And of course I know all about the four Jewish flunkies who write the sharp memos on how to cut Israel down to size. But they and a few other individuals notwithstanding, Jews are sparse in this administration, not because there are no Jewish conservatives but because most Jewish conservatives are not country-club conservatives.

I disagree with many conservative Jews, lawyers and scholars and businessmen, but I recognize them as serious, as idealists in their way. That is something you would never say of Bush or Baker. Nor would you ever think of them as learned or even eager to learn. They are too anti-intellectual, which is one reason they have nothing to say right now. Having failed palpably at home, and now recognizing that they have also failed abroad (who can stand to look at what they call the New World Order?), they are not open to fresh ideas or to ideas at all. What they want is a few new tricks.

All of this is reason enough to prefer Bill Clinton and Al Gore to Bush-Baker-Quayle. Not, let me add quickly, that the Democratic party is the chosen vessel for the hopes of mankind. But in putting forward Clinton and Gore (and not Clinton plus someone from the paleoliberal wing of the party), the Democrats have given us a message, as Hendrik Hertzberg has written, "of amplification and consistency." This year's ticket shows that the party has understood its own role in the disintegration

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the defining ethic which made America different.

That ethic, always in the process of developing, linked individual liberty with communal and cross-communal bonds. In that ethic, moreover, the idea of tolerance had real meaning and real authority—in contrast again to the Republicans who even as they fulminated in Houston against the corrosive trends in our society also exacerbated those trends with expressions of xenophobia and meanspiritedness. The fact is that the Republicans do not want a color-blind Constitution. Where it has suited them, as in the electoral process, they have manipulated racial and ethnic categories more deftly than the Democrats, doing more damage to the fabric of liberal society.

To Jews the more welcoming traits in the Democratic party are bound to be congenial. Their old political home is likely also to be the home of the new immigrants whose energy, discipline, respect for education, eagerness to work, and commitment to family make them the hope for a demographic balance which will keep our cities safe and our people industrious. From them and from their labors will come the tax base required by an expanding and progressive society. From them also will come the distinctive kind of immigrant patriotism and love of country so characteristic of American Jews and so alien to those assembled in Houston. This is the love for America of people who know in their bones what other places are like, how narrow and intolerant and closed. Indeed, I can testify that Clinton and Gore fully grasp, in this era of revived tribal hatred, the global significance, as model and as reproach, of thinking of ourselves once again as one nation.

I do not suggest that within the Democratic party the struggle for norms of tolerance and inclusiveness is over; far from it. The disuniters of America think they have a stake in a Democratic victory, and perhaps they do. It was no less fraught with meaning that Jesse Jackson, another certified anti-Semite, drew cheers at the Democratic convention than that Pat Buchanan did so at the Republican. Still, the message from the top is different, and that message will be strengthened if constituencies which had deserted the Democrats or whose loyalties had been muted show that they welcome the difference and will give their ardors to it.

One more domestic issue carries special weight with Jews, and that is the place of education and science in our society. These are important not simply because for many Jews they have been the characteristic paths to mobility, work satisfaction, and acceptance, though that in itself is no small consideration for the future. Governor Clinton and Senator Gore are in this respect more than just adequate tribunes. They are exemplary tribunes. They know the language of education and science, and they know its meanings. They grasp the new paradigms and they grasp, too, the technologies which extend life, enhance knowledge, make information accessible, and create opportunities for the kind of expanding commerce without which complex societies wither. In their nostalgia for a yesterday which never quite was, George Bush and his partners are of the age of the Studebakers. The Democratic ticket is aimed at the next century.

And about Israel? Here I write with some confidence and personal knowledge. Bill Clinton and Al Gore are more deeply and sensibly devoted to the Zionist dream and the Zionist reality than any President and Vice President have been since Harry Truman and Alben Barkley—both, by the way, also border-state Southerners. Maybe there is something about having read the Bible as children that makes them alert to the miracle of the ongoing Return, such worldly evidence as there is of the *mysterium tremendum* of the God of Israel. Moreover, as David Twersky wrote of Gore in the *Forward* (equally applicable to Clinton, I think), he is, unlike many other Democrats, "one who doesn't have to reconfigure his general foreign-policy framework to accommodate his love of Zion." I have talked about these matters with Clinton; and I have walked the streets of the faithful city with Gore and with Mrs. Gore, really from Dan to Beersheba, on ground where the patriarchs walked and Jesus, too, where history is immanent, where mankind's boldest and subtlest convictions were born.

Clinton and Gore do not delude themselves about Israel's neighbors and about the vast seachange which is required in their political culture before real peace is possible. This is how they knew, when George Bush lacked a clue, that the Gulf war did not end last spring in a victory satisfactory to the demands of justice and decency. It is also how they know that peace between Arab and Jew will only be as stable as Israel itself is physically secure. They believe that, for the best of political and spiritual reasons, our democracy dare not leave another democracy, and especially not that lonely democracy, to the cruel caprices of the region.

With Clinton and Gore in office, the U.S.-Israel relationship may have its share of quarrels or spats, but no one will have reason to suspect malice, either toward Jews or toward the Jewish nation. Knowing the limitations of the Arab Middle East, and knowing how little eager Americans are right now to guarantee precarious agreements between hostile peoples, they will not undertake something the U.S. will be hard put to ensure.

Under the best of circumstances, Israel is doomed to live dangerously. Clinton-Gore would never worsen those circumstances. This is, alas, something which cannot be said for George Bush or for his true second, James Baker. The choice is clear.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bosnia: The Return of History

Josef Joffe

IT WAS not supposed to happen that way. History had ended, and the New World Order was upon us. But then, on August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait, unleashing the Gulf war. Less than a year later, on June 27, 1991, fighting erupted in the land that was formerly Yugoslavia, right after two of its republics, Slovenia and Croatia, had seceded. And the fighting in the Balkans, which once gave us two wars (1912 and 1913) as a prelude to the Great One, continues—with tens of thousands dead and perhaps a million refugees.

We are used to Middle East wars; there have been five or nine since 1945, depending on how we count. But in *Europe*, one hour by plane from Munich and two from Paris?

If we want to pick a single date for history's "end," July 16, 1990 will do best. On that day, Mikhail Gorbachev and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl came together in Stavropol to sign a document which, in effect, was the death warrant of the Soviet empire. In Stavropol, quickly dubbed "Stavrapallo," Gorbachev conceded what Soviet policy had fought tooth and nail for 45 years: a Germany reunified within the West. To do so was to quit. For to give away *the* strategic brace of the Soviet empire was to give away the rest. It was East Germany that had helped Moscow to contain, encircle, and cow its restless satrapies. And if Gorbachev had ever hoped to reform the empire in order to restore it, the opportunity was now gone forever. The rest was rearguard actions, including the abortive putsch of August 1991. On December 25 of that year, the Red Flag fluttering over the Kremlin was hauled down, and the Soviet Union, the "Third Rome," was no more.

For those schooled in the modern-day millenarianism of Condorcet and Turbot, Hegel and Marx, it was easy to conclude that history had now *truly* come to its end. With the last great foe of liberal-capitalist democracy on the ash-heap of history, it was only logical to assume that the Hegelian *Weltgeist* had won. Henceforth, the great issue of politics would no longer be the Leninist question "who-whom?," but the pragmatic concern "how-when?" Rule over men, to coin a phrase, would be replaced by the administration of things.

But then, right in that same summer of 1990 and right on the dot, the Gulf war broke out, to be followed one summer later by the Balkan war. Were these wars mere mishaps—or atavistic convulsions—on the road to teleology's final triumph? On the contrary, they were more accurately to be seen as *necessary* results of history's alleged finale. For neither of them would have broken out in an intact bipolar world.

In that world, Saddam Hussein, a Soviet client, would not have dared invade Kuwait, a mini-state firmly ensconced among America's protectorates. For a key rule of bipolarity has always been: neither attack, nor allow your clients to attack, a critical asset of your mortal rival. Washington and Moscow had well absorbed the lessons of past alliance politics when unruly junior partners (like Austria-Hungary) had half-dragged, half-pushed their patrons (Wilhelmine Germany) into war. But with Soviet might melting away like the wicked witch, so was Moscow's control over its satraps.

Conversely, if Soviet power had still been undamaged as Saddam executed his Kuwait caper, the United States, taken by surprise, surely would not have fielded half-a-million troops so close to Moscow's underbelly. The U.S. would have drawn a line in the Saudi sand (and no more) to deter a second Iraqi thrust. But to unleash a full-scale war on the edge of the USSR? Hardly. The risk of an existential clash would have loomed too high.

IN AN intact bipolar world, where Communism was still a potent force, the war in Yugoslavia would not have erupted, either. After World War II, this strange concoction of six republics and two autonomous provinces labeled the "Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia" was held together by the sheer force of Communist power. Joseph Broz, better known as "Tito," and his *Partizani* had prevailed in the internal war against Serbian Chetniks and Croatian Ustashi, and as Nazi military power collapsed across all of Europe in early 1945, Tito could claim that he had also defeated the Germans.

The aftermath of this "war of national liberation" was a Soviet state. The 1946 constitution was patterned after the Soviet one. The economy

JOSEF JOFFE is a columnist and the editorial-page editor of the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* in Munich.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was nationalized, and though Yugoslavia was *pro forma* a federal construction, power was centralized at the heart of the Communist party. Though the system was called "administrative socialism," that was but another word for a Stalinist dictatorship.

Yet if one-man Communist rule was the skeleton of the organism, Soviet enmity soon provided the sinews and muscles that held it all together. By early 1948, a bitter struggle had broken out between the two "fraternal" states, and in the summer, Stalin had Yugoslavia expelled from the Comintern. Steady, and vicious, pressure from Moscow followed, suppressing the hatred the warring nations and tribes of Yugoslavia had brought *into* the federation—and though exhausted, not forgotten. The specter of a Soviet attack, waved like a flag by Belgrade, delivered an ersatz nationalism for free. Building on the partisan myth, Yugoslavia became an armed camp—drawing legitimacy and cohesion from the brooding foe outside the gate.

In the 1950's and 60's, indeed until Tito's death in 1980, Yugoslavia could find another "national" mission in that rickety but logical by-product of bipolarity known as the Movement of the Non-Aligned. Virtually invented by Tito, nonalignment was an institution and ideology that continued to contain the mortal tensions built into the Yugoslav construction. It was also a foreign policy which legitimated independence from the Soviet Union, which bestowed a national identity on a nation that had none, and which produced tidy diplomatic and economic gains, to boot. For with this anti-bipolar policy Yugoslavia could draw profit and prestige from bipolarity: soon *both* East and West were courting the maverick Stalinist regime, delivering aid and even arms.

It was thus no accident, but quite fitting, that Yugoslavia exploded precisely in the summer of 1991. What could have symbolized the collapse of bipolarity better than the green light a tottering Soviet Union had given to U.S. intervention in the Gulf? No longer a "pole" in world affairs, Moscow had sunk to the position of supplicant, doing Washington's bidding in the Security Council and begging for money during the London G-7 Summit in the summer of 1991. Little wonder, then, that the tectonics of the Yugoslav polity now began to shift ever more loudly.

Loudest of all was the chauvinism of the Serbs. Though Tito himself was of Slovenian-Croatian stock, the Serbs had been running Yugoslavia since the end of World War II. Belgrade was the power center, and Belgrade was Serbia. The Serbs dominated the officer corps, the bureaucracy, and the secret police. Nevertheless, as always, the Serbs felt slighted and demeaned, robbed of their deserved status and patrimony. They had after all bled more than any other nationality during World War II—or so they told themselves—and yet, instead of rewarding them, Tito had punished them. To curtail Serbian dominance, Tito had amputated Serbian territory in the north (Vojvodina) and in the south (Kosovo). And now, in 1991, as the other republics moved to strike out for national independence, the Serbs saw themselves in the role of the ultimate loser. Their brethren made up 30 percent of the population in Bosnia, 17 percent in Croatia, 55 percent in Vojvodina, and 10 percent in Kosovo—an *irredenta* destined for oppression by the lesser races.

When Slovenia and Croatia absconded in the summer of 1991—a decision aided and abetted above all by Germany and Austria—the die was cast. If Yugoslavia could not be glued together by ideology or by an external enemy, then "Greater Serbia" was the second-best solution. And that required brute force, of which the Serbs had plenty, to carve out a large chunk of Croatia (achieved earlier this year) and to divide Bosnia-Herzegovina between Croatia and Serbia (the Serbs now hold 70 percent of Bosnian territory). We should expect Kosovo to be next. Though the population there is 90-percent Albanian, it has been the fountainhead of Serb nationalist mythology since the Battle of Kosovo in 1389. This was where the Serbs fought—and lost—their cosmic battle against the Turkish infidel; it is, as the Serbs are wont to portray it, the very birthplace of their nation.

HISTORY, in short, has returned with a vengeance—like a film stopped for 45 years which has suddenly resumed. Everybody remembers the last performance. The Serbs remember the "Independent State of Croatia," a creation of Hitler and Mussolini under the fascist Ustasha leader Ante Pavelic. In May 1941, the Ustasha commander of Bania Luka, a certain Dr. Gutic, told his followers: "I have given orders for the total extinction of the Serbs [on Croatian territory]. Annihilate them wherever you can find them." And annihilate the Croatian fascists did—in ways that even shook their Nazi overlords. Close to two million Yugoslavs died during World War II, half of them in the mutual slaughter of the South Slav nations.

But genocide did not remain a Croatian monopoly for long. Soon Serbian nationalists rallied around Colonel Draza Mihailovic, a monarchist fighting for "Greater Serbia." Mihailovic's Chetniks (from the Serbian word for "band" or "company") began by attacking German positions, but *Der Führer* knew how to deal with these "bandits." He gave orders to murder 50 to 100 hostages for each German killed, and so Mihailovic stopped—to the point of turning his forces into something of an "official" resistance (which would even collaborate with the Germans and Italians). His Chetniks—Serbs and Montenegrins—then turned against Serbia's other enemies: Muslims and Croats. In terms of sheer bloodlust and sadism, the Chetniks were every bit the equal of the Ustashi.

Nor were Tito's *Partizani* more humane. After

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

several hapless attempts to bring Chetnik and Partisan forces together, a third internal war erupted. In addition to Ustashi murdering Serbs, and Chetniks murdering Croats and Bosnians, the Chetnik and the Partisan resistance armies went to war against each other. (At one point, Mihailovic even asked the Germans for help against Tito; they refused.)

The payback came during and after the war. Wherever the Partisans were victorious in Croatia and Bosnia, mass executions followed. The worst, however, took place after the war. In the spring of 1945, anybody tainted by collaboration with the Germans tried to save his life by escaping to Italy or Austria. Ustashi, Chetniks, and anti-Tito Slovenians were pushed back by the Allies, only to be slaughtered by the Partisans. In Bleiburg (on the Austro-Yugoslav border) several tens of thousands are said to have been machine-gunned to death on May 15 and 16, 1945; a similar massacre took place just inside Slovenia in Kocevski Rog.

In short, almost everybody in the lands that were once Yugoslavia has accounts to settle and memories to live down. That does not make for cool heads or for compromise. It is a European Lebanon—a Hobbesian world with plenty of ammunition. It is a struggle to the quick for turf and power among nations and tribes bound together by nothing but hatred and fear—and the curse of settlement patterns where ethnic boundaries do not coincide with political ones.

Nor is it so clear, at second sight, who the good and the bad guys are. Slobodan Milosevic, the neo-Communist leader of Serbia, is no liberal democrat. But neither is Franjo Tudjman, his Croatian counterpart, whose ideological roots reach back into the clerical fascism of the Ustasha period. And both Serbs and Croats, though deadly enemies, are not above striking a deal over the dead body of Bosnia, whose Muslims (by no means the Khomeinist fundamentalists of Serbian propaganda) will be the ultimate losers of this war.

It is in Bosnia-Herzegovina where the moral issue has hit the world squarely in the face. When the fighting erupted last year in Slovenia and Croatia, the West could still becalm itself by weighing the case in terms of "on the one hand, on the other." Had not Slovenia and Croatia seceded without trying for a peaceful divorce? How would the rest of Europe live with the precedent of unhappy nationalities just breaking away? What about the Serbian minority inside the new state of Croatia? (At the turn of 1991-92, a European Community commission was to certify whether the two breakaway republics met the EC's conditions for recognition. A critical item was the protection of minority rights. Slovenia passed the test, Croatia did not.) Also, the Croats put up a good fight, and with one-third of their territory in Serbian hands, the war suddenly stopped.

But Bosnia-Herzegovina was different, even though the dynamic of the conflict closely resembled the precedent of Croatia and Slovenia. There it had been secession that triggered the Serbian onslaught. Here it was the referendum of March 1, 1992—with 99 percent in favor of independence—that lit a very short fuse on a very large powder keg. Also, Bosnia harbored the largest Serb minority in any of the non-Serb republics—more than 30 percent of the population. (Croats made up 17 percent.) Still, the moral issue crystallized very quickly.

As Muslim and Serbian militias were sniping away at each other, the residents of Bosnia's capital Sarajevo suffered an endless bombardment from the surrounding hills. In the towns of Bosanski Brod and Biyelina, Serbian militias executed veritable massacres among the civilians. But what turned confusion, even indifference, in Western Europe and in the U.S. into pure outrage was television, carrying into living rooms images thought forever banished from Western eyes: chilling pictures of concentration camps, with emaciated figures looking at us through barbed wire. And what the Serbs themselves called "ethnic cleansing" brought back terms like *judenrein*.

Nor were the Croats inactive. If the Serbs now held 70 percent of Bosnia (according to their own count), the Croats have virtually absorbed the rest. By the end of the summer, Muslim resistance was essentially concentrated in Sarajevo and in Bihac (a pocket in the northwest).

There was no moral dispute this time. There was nobody whose heart did not go out to the Bosnian Muslims or who argued against helping them. Nor was there that curious bout of shadowboxing which had pitted Germany and Austria on one side against France, Britain, and the United States on the other during the Croatian campaign. That performance looked like a veritable replay of World War I, with Austria and Germany lining up behind the former Hapsburg possessions Croatia and Slovenia, and the three Western powers tacitly supporting their old ally Serbia by upholding its claim for an intact Yugoslavia. Apparently, memories die hard in the West, too. This summer, during the Munich G-7 Summit, the French President, François Mitterrand, reminisced: "I have not forgotten the historic ties between France and Serbia and the solidarity that bound them together in two world wars."

Memories also quickly melded with *Realpolitik*. Especially the French were quick to spot a "Teutonic bloc" *redivivus* as they watched their good German friends, the Austrians in tow, making a headlong, follow-us-or-else dash for the recognition of Croatia and Slovenia. Here too, then, history staged a comeback—though as a pale copy of the real thing that was World War I.

But by the time the Serbs (and the Croats in the shadows) proceeded to carve up Bosnia, the jockeying in the West for position had virtually stopped. The United States wanted to help, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

so did Britain and France. Indeed, in the UN Security Council they all teamed up to support Resolution 770 which sanctioned "all necessary means" to assure the transportation of relief supplies to beleaguered Sarajevo. There was no shortage of moral outrage this time, and there was no dispute over the identity of victim and aggressor.

THE dispute lay elsewhere—pitting *Moralpolitik* (intervene!) against *Realpolitik* (stay out!). Another novel feature of the debate both in the U.S. and in Europe was the surprising, almost bizarre, line-up, with Left and Right freely intermingling on either side of the argument.

In the run-up to the Gulf war, by contrast, the familiar battle lines had been quickly reestablished. On the whole, liberals and protagonists farther Left opposed the war; conservatives, with some notable exceptions, advocated military force against Saddam Hussein. Especially in Western Europe, the moribund peace movement (though with significant exceptions there, too) tried to recapture yesterday's glory by protesting the war against Saddam, thus in effect taking his side. Generally, the Social Democratic Left took a similar route—condemning the Iraqi invasion, but condemning the use of American power even more (the tide did turn when Iraqi Scuds hit Israel, reminding Germans of the Holocaust and all West Europeans of the unsavory role they had played in the sub-rosa supply of nuclear and chemical warfare materials to Saddam).

Essentially, the Gulf war reactivated classic anti-American reflexes; its real, though subliminal, motive force was fear and resentment of the United States. And the subconscious syllogism went as follows: Power is bad; America has lots of power; *ergo*, America is bad—and worse than Saddam. Fittingly, then, the West European peace movement could still send thousands into the streets during the Gulf war; but virtually nobody would go out to protest Serbian conquests.

In the United States, it was mainly the memory of Vietnam which had animated liberal opponents of intervention in the Gulf—hence a rhetoric that depicted economic pressure as more effective and less risky than war. But in the summer of 1992, this familiar world was no more. In the U.S., such conservative stalwarts as Jeane Kirkpatrick became the strange bedfellows of liberal columnists such as Anthony Lewis in arguing for military action against the Serbs. In Europe, Kirkpatrick's sister-in-spirit, former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, joined Laborites and Continental Social Democrats in calling for forceful intervention.

There is perhaps a certain logic to this curious melee. On the Left, the issue—or the threat—this time was not American power; if anything, it was the lack of it. The U.S. did *not* flex its muscles; since American interests were only remotely affected, Washington took the lead in not leading. That allowed liberals, especially European liberals, to follow their basic instincts. Since the Greek Uprising (1821-29), the liberal creed has on the whole been interventionist when the issue was not the balance of power but humanitarianism or ideology. Bosnia fit this case.

Conservatives are usually not so enthusiastic about intervention when compelling interests are absent. It was thus left to strong believers like Thatcher and Kirkpatrick to sound the alarm—perhaps also to stick a thorn into the side of an unbeloved successor (John Major) or a wishy-washy deviationist (George Bush). They did so by invoking "Munich" and by assimilating an ethnic war to the cosmic battle against (in Kirkpatrick's words) "would-be aggressors and dictators" *à la* Hitler and Stalin—thus rolling a moral concern into a grand-strategic one. The message was: intervene now, or face worse later—as if Serbia were Nazi Germany and Milosevic *Der Führer*.

But Serbia does not have the most powerful army in Europe, nor is it beholden to visions of dominating the Continent. And while Milosevic may be a nasty, neo-Communist power-monger with ambitions, he falls a bit short of the evil genius that was Hitler. This is precisely why those moderate conservatives at the helm in Washington, London, and Bonn—and even in Paris, where Mitterrand held off his interventionist Socialist brethren—chose discretion over valor. For the likes of Bush, Major, and Kohl—indeed, for anybody in the position of making real choices with real consequences—the issue was not as easy as for pundits and former prime ministers.

IN THE annals of the modern state system it is hard to find instances of intervention motivated purely by humanitarian concern. In addition to the moral motive, three additional conditions have had to be satisfied. Is it in my interest? Is there a reasonable chance of success? Can I muster the requisite means?

In the Gulf war, all four conditions were met. First, the invasion of Kuwait struck a powerful moral chord in the West, and it kept resonating in spite of the few apologists who tried to paint Iraq's oil grab as an instance of intra-Arab distributive justice. Kuwait, a tiny defenseless neighbor, had been a threat to nobody. And Saddam Hussein, the "Butcher of Baghdad," was evil personified—an unusually ruthless tyrant who had even dropped poison gas on Kurdish civilians.

Second, there was a trio of compelling interests. (1) If Saddam were to join his own oil riches to those of Kuwait, he would acquire a commanding position in the market and thus the ability to manipulate the price and the output of this strategic resource. (2) If he got away with his conquest, he might end up dominating the Middle East. Joining Africa, Asia, and Europe, this was the most critical strategic region in the world—and without the West, there was nobody else to uphold the balance. (3) Working furiously at long-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

range missiles and nuclear weapons, Saddam soon would also pose a threat to points beyond.

Third, there was a reasonable chance of success at an acceptable cost because Saddam's military disposition (rigid deployments plus long lines of communications) and the nature of the battlefield (an open desert) uniquely favored Western weapons and tactics.

Fourth, because of *all* of the above, it was possible, though still not easy, to persuade Western societies to support the war and to underwrite the mobilization of the requisite means.

In the Balkan case, only the first condition was unambiguously present: moral outrage. It was easy to argue in simple and forceful ethical terms. If a thug beats up an innocent, it is my obligation to intervene. But statesmen have a more difficult problem than individuals. When they order their young to face death, there must be compelling interests which justify the sacrifice in terms of their own nation's welfare. Statesmen do not live by the precept that virtue is its own reward. They must also ask: is there a reward *beyond* duty? Or in the vernacular: can I do well by doing good? Will a small sacrifice now forestall larger costs later? Or will non-action today lead to calamity tomorrow?

This may be a callous way to make the point, but it hardly defies historical reality. The West did not intervene in Cambodia, though the figure of three million murdered by the Khmer Rouge is now etched forever into our memories. Between 1967 and 1970, Nigerian federal forces killed hundreds of thousands of secessionist Biafrans as the world stood by. The death factory at Auschwitz was never bombed.

Now came Bosnia's turn. Here there was no oil to be safeguarded, no nuclear-armed dictator to be stopped, no strategic balance to be restored. In short, there was no compelling interest to galvanize moral action.

Nor did the Balkan war offer a reasonable chance of success at a reasonable price. In the Gulf, forces armed and trained for World War III went after an army that had been unable to best the rag-tag Holy Warriors of the Khomeinist revolution. Technology was on the side of the West, and so was topography. Against the best professional armies in the world, Saddam's conscripts were sitting ducks in the desert. After a few weeks of bombing, Iraq's military infrastructure was *kaput* and its dug-in troops demoralized—courtesy of cruelly brilliant skies and of American Star Wars weapons.

Yet even in this ideal setting, America's eyes in the sky and countless hunt-and-destroy missions could not eliminate Saddam's Scuds: all their launchers needed was the cover of a bridge overhead. Now add the clouds over Bosnia—and the copses, mountains, and forests below. Here there would be no dug-in divisions, but artillery moved in minutes and mortars carried away in knapsacks. Here (recalling the role Bosnia played in Tito's war plans) would be a network of hidden and hardened depots, command posts, and arms factories. Satellites would not find them, and pinpoint strikes would not destroy them. Here, finally, there would be no neatly drawn battle lines but house-to-house fighting, guerrilla tactics, and civilians in between—in short, not Iraq but Lebanon.

THERE was no cheap solution. By August, Britain, France, and Italy stood ready to dispatch 4,400 men to protect relief convoys bound for Sarajevo. Such a wagon train might feed the hungry, but it could not stop the fighting. It would be a bluff easily called.* This time, Western forces would be the sitting ducks—strung out along 180 miles of road between the port of Split and the beleaguered city. A credible and effective Sarajevo relief force would require divisions, not regiments. These would have to secure a corridor from the sea, clean out the snipers, take the hills, occupy the approaches—and have plenty of men to spare for wide-ranging mobile operations against hit-and-run attacks on an ever-widening periphery.

But then what? There was still the rest of Bosnia—from Bihac, one of the last Muslim holdouts in the west, to Goradze in the east. There would still be lots of Serbs, Croats, and Muslims willing to fight, trying to improve on, or to reverse, the status quo. On the ethnic leopard skin that is Bosnia, a single safe harbor (as for the Kurds in northern Iraq) would not do. The entire country—or lots of little chunks—would have to be pacified, and at that point, divisions would turn into army corps.

As for a "Baghdad strategy"—massive firepower delivered by air to take out power plants, electricity grids, airports, truck convoys, and bunkers in Serbia—it would surely hurt Serbia, but it would not necessarily stop the bloodshed "micro-managed" by local warlords with the help of ample supplies of assault rifles and mortars.

Lebanon was the most instructive analogy because the objective in Bosnia would be similar. The purpose of intervention would not be to break the will of a single power center or to drive out a foreign invader but (to quote the *Economist*) "to pacify a non-country that has collapsed into tribal warfare." (Remember "pacification" in Vietnam?) Massive fire power, delivered "cheaply" by air, would be in the position of a jackhammer where a dental drill was required. It would make the rubble bounce but not rearrange ethnic jigsaw puzzles. (Ask the Israelis, the best soldiers around, how well they did in forging a political order with warlords and holy men, Shiites and Maronites, Druze and Palestinians. They bled,

* Would Milosevic dare to attack the armed emissaries of three great European powers? He would not have to assume that risk. He would claim innocence and point to those angry patriots in place fighting for the rights of the Serbian minority.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lost, and left.) True, the first order of business would be to stop the slaughter in Bosnia. But Serbs, Croats, and Muslims would still be in place afterward—full of hatred and lust for revenge.

The question then was: if we go in, how and when do we get out? Generals do not like open-ended commitments, and democratic electorates do not like an endless succession of sealed coffins. In the absence of compelling interests, it was the vision of a quick and cheap success that animated Western interventionists. A closer look at the political and military realities on the ground did not warrant such optimism. And this was why those charged with making real choices were so reluctant to match moral outrage with equally impressive military means.

There was another question, virtually shrouded in a taboo. If we were obliged to help, but dared not do so for sound politico-strategic reasons, why not deliver sophisticated arms to the Bosnian Muslims? True, I am not bound to come to the rescue if my chances are small and the risk to my own life is large. But then, I am at least obliged to throw the victim a club or a gun so that he can help himself.

The West did not do this, nor did it even openly debate the issue. One argument was: "But arms deliveries would prolong and enlarge the bloodshed"—as if brief and one-sided bloodshed were better. Another counter was: "On whom will today's victims turn their guns tomorrow?"—as if it were better for them to die now than to retain the capacity for mischief in the future. These were curious arguments and they betrayed a moral confusion that reflected the larger confusion engendered by the Balkan war.

WHAT does this clash of *Realpolitik* and *Idealpolitik* tell us about the "New Europe" and the "New World Order"?

It is hard to fault the United States for not leading the charge. After all, Western Europe—potent, prosperous, and in place—should take the call first when its own house is on fire. But together with the Gulf war, the Balkan tragedy spells out a sobering message: if the United States leads, action follows; if it does not, little of consequence happens.

Nor should it come as a surprise that Europe, once liberated from the fetters of the cold war, would flummox its visionaries. Left to its own devices and no longer subject to the discipline of a great quasi-religious conflict, Europe is returning to history—almost surreptitiously in the West and with a vengeance in the East.

Instead of coalescing around a single purpose, Western Europe is renationalizing ever so slowly. France worries about German power, Germany is angling for status commensurate with its clout, and Britain worries about both of them. Had they joined forces early on in the Yugoslav drama, perhaps they might have been able to dominate the stage instead of signaling their impotence to the protagonists of "Greater Serbia." By now, Serbian conquests in Croatia and Bosnia are virtually complete; any intervention would be too little and too late. The best that we might still be able to do is to fall back on deterrence by putting international forces in place—in Macedonia or in Kosovo—*before* terror follows temptation.

European institutions, proudly poised to conquer the post-cold-war future, may soon feel the fallout. A year ago, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE)—with 51 members the largest of the bunch—stood ready to replace NATO as *the* European security organization. It now looks bound for irreversible coma—a bit like the League of Nations which died an unheralded death in 1936 when it could not stop Mussolini's aggression against Abyssinia. The purely European nine-member West European Union (WEU) *has* been in coma for decades, but there was hope at last when the Balkan war began. As the military arm of the EC, it would act *without* America. Today, the British would rather place their 1,800 troops earmarked for Sarajevo under UN command; and the French prefer their own officers in command of their 1,100-man contingent.

Together with Europe's hapless performance in the early stage of the conflict, this does not bode well for the EC whose grand design for a more perfect union—the Maastricht treaty—remains unratified. The display of barely camouflaged discord may well add to the doubts about sacrificing national identity and sovereignty to the uncertain god of Europe: if we cannot act together, it may be better to stay apart. At any rate, if the nation-state and nationalism are making a comeback everywhere else in Europe, why would the Twelve be able to defy history and march in the opposite direction of an *e pluribus unum*?

Are the 1990's then going to resemble the 1930's? No, of course not. Serbia is not Nazi Germany, and Milosevic is no Hitler. This time, no power of any weight wants to overturn the overall status quo, and there are no revisionists with big chips in the European game. Still, farther east and south, restless nations and tribes have read the handwriting on the wall: superior firepower is worth more than a 24-carat moral claim or a benevolent resolution on the part of the EC or the UN. History has not ended; only that great master of discipline, the cold war, has taken a bow. The little wars have just begun.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Free at Last?

Glenn C. Loury

A FORMATIVE experience of my growing-up on the South Side of Chicago in the 1960's occurred during one of those heated, earnest political rallies so typical of the period. I was about eighteen at the time. Woody, who had been my best friend since Little League, suggested that we attend. Being political neophytes, neither of us knew many of the participants at this rally, which had been called to galvanize the local black community's response to some pending infringement by the white power structure. Although I no longer remember the offense, I can still vividly recall how very agitated about it we all were, determined to fight the good fight, even to the point of being arrested if it came to that. Judging by his demeanor, Woody was among the most zealous of those present.

Despite his zeal, it took courage for Woody to attend the meeting. Though he often proclaimed his blackness, and though he had a Negro grandparent on each side of the family, he nevertheless looked to all the world like your typical white boy. Everyone assumed as much and I had, too, when we first began playing together nearly a decade earlier, after I had moved into the middle-class neighborhood called Park Manor where Woody's family had been living for some time.

There were a number of white families on our block when we first arrived; within a couple of years they had all been replaced by aspiring black families like our own. I often wondered why Woody's parents never moved. Then I overheard his mother declare to one of her new neighbors, "We just wouldn't run from our own kind." The comment befuddled me at the time, but somewhat later, while we were watching the movie *Imitation of Life* on television, my mother explained to me how someone could be black even if he looked white. She told me about people like that in our own family—second cousins living in a fashionable suburb on whom one would never dare simply to drop in because they were "passing for white." This was my earliest glimpse of the truth that racial identity in America is inherently a social and cultural, not simply a biological, construct—that it necessarily involves an irreducible element of choice.

From the moment I learned of the idea of "passing" I was intrigued (and troubled) by it. I enjoyed imagining my racial brethren surreptitiously infiltrating the citadels of white exclusivity. The fantasy allowed me to believe that, despite all appearances and despite the white man's best efforts to the contrary, we blacks were nevertheless present, if unannounced, *everywhere* in American society. But I was also disturbed by the evident implication that for a black, denial of one's genuine self was a necessary prerequisite to "making it" in American society. What "passing" seemed to say was that it was necessary to choose between racial authenticity and personal success. Also, to my adolescent mind it seemed grossly unfair that, because of my own relatively dark complexion, the option was not available to me!

It was after the conversation with my mother that it dawned on me that Woody's parents must have been passing for white in pre-integration Park Manor. The neighborhood's changing racial composition had confronted them with a moment of truth. Their decision—to stay and raise their children among "their own kind"—was a fateful one for Woody who, as he matured, became determined not simply to live among blacks but, perhaps in atonement for his parents' prior sins, unambiguously to become one.

The young men in the neighborhood did not make this easy. Many delighted in picking fights with him, teasing him about being a "white boy" and refusing to credit his insistent claim: "I'm a brother, too!" For if he desperately wanted to be black, his peers in the neighborhood would not let him. Because he had the option to be white—even though it was an option he radically rejected—those without the option would not accept his claim to a shared racial experience.

I knew Woody well. We had become good friends, and I wanted to accept him on his own terms. But even I found myself doubting that he fully grasped the pain, frustration, anger, and self-doubt many of us felt upon encountering the intractability of American racism. However much he sympathized with our plight, he seemed to experience it only vicariously.

GLENN C. LOURY is professor of economics at Boston University. The present article, in somewhat different form, will appear in *Lure and Loathing: Essays on Race, Identity, and the Ambivalence of Assimilation*, edited by Gerald Early, which Viking Press will publish in January. Copyright © 1992 by Glenn C. Loury.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So there we were, at this boisterous, angry political rally. A critical moment came when the leaders interrupted their speechmaking to solicit ideas from "the people." Woody had an idea, and enthusiastically raised his voice above the murmur. But before he could finish his first sentence he was cut short by one of the dashiki-clad brothers-in-charge, who demanded to know how a "white boy" got the authority to have an opinion about what black people should be doing. That was one of our problems, the "brother" said; we were always letting white people "peep our hole card" but we were never privy to their deliberations in return.

A silence fell over the room. The indignant "brother" asked if anyone could "vouch for this white boy." More excruciating silence ensued. Now it was *my* moment of truth. Woody turned plaintively toward me, but I would not meet his eyes. To my eternal disgrace, I refused to speak up for him. He was asked to leave the meeting, and did so without uttering a word in his own defense.

Subsequently, neither of us could bear to discuss the incident. I offered no apology or explanation, and he asked for none. However, though we continued to be friendly, our relationship was forever changed. I was never again to hear Woody exclaim: "I'm a brother, too."

It seems to me that Woody's dilemma, and mine, tell us something important about race and personal identity in American society. His situation was made so difficult by the fact that he embraced a self-definition dramatically inconsistent with the identity reflexively and stubbornly imputed to him by others. In turn, the lack of a social confirmation of his subjective sense of self left him uncertain, at a deep level, about who he really was. Ultimately there seemed to be no way for him to avoid living fraudulently—either as a black passing for white, or as a white trying (too hard) to be black.

As Woody's close friend I had become familiar with, and occasionally shared in, the pitfalls of this situation, as when people seeing us together would assume both that he was white and that I was "the kind of Negro who hangs out with white boys." I resented that assumption. And since then, as a black intellectual making my living in the academic establishment during a period of growing racial conflict in our society, I have often experienced a similar dissonance between my self-concept and the socially imputed definition of who I am supposed to be. I have had to balance my desire not to disappoint the expectations of others—both whites and blacks, but most especially blacks—with my conviction that one should strive to live life with integrity.

This does not make me a heroic figure; I will not indulge the libertarian conceit of the glorious individual who, though put upon by society, blazes his own path. To me the opposition between individual and society is ambiguous: the self is inevitably shaped both by the objective world and by other selves, and what one is being faithful to when resisting the temptation to conform to others' expectations is always a socially determined, if subjectively experienced, vision of the self. Still, I see this incident of a quarter-century ago as a kind of private metaphor, symbolizing the problem of living in good faith.

I have since lost contact with Woody: I suspect that, having tired of his struggle against society's presumptions, he is now passing. But that moment of truth in the South Side church basement, and my failure in the face of it, have helped me understand the depth of my own need to be seen by others as "black enough." The fact is, I willingly betrayed someone I had known for a decade, a person whom I loved and who loved me, in order to avoid the risk of being rejected by strangers. In a way, at that moment and often again later in my life, I, too, was passing—hoping to be mistaken for something I was not. To proclaim before the black radicals in the audience that this "white boy" at my side was in fact our "brother" would, I feared, have compromised my own chance of being received among them as a genuine peer. Who, after all, was there to vouch for *me*?

This was not an unfounded concern, for at that meeting, as at so many others of the period, people with insufficiently militant views were routinely berated as self-hating, shuffle-along, "house nigger" types, complicit with whites in the perpetuation of racial oppression.

Then, as now, blacks who befriended (or, heaven forbid, married) whites, who dressed or talked or wore their hair a certain way, who listened to certain kinds of music, read certain books, or expressed certain opinions were laughed at, ostracized, and generally demeaned as inauthentic by other, more righteous (as in "self-righteous") blacks. The indignant "brother" who challenged Woody's right to speak at that rally was not merely imposing a racial test (only blacks are welcome here); he was also, and mainly, applying a loyalty test (are you truly with us or against us?). And this was a test which anyone could fail if he did not conform to the collective definition of what it meant to be genuinely black. I feared that speaking up for Woody would have marked me as a disloyal "Tom" among the "blacker-than-thou" crowd. This was a fate the thought of which, in those years, I could not bear.

I now understand how this desire to be regarded as genuinely black, to be seen as a "regular brother," has dramatically altered my life. It narrowed the range of my earliest intellectual pursuits, distorted my relationships with other people, censored my political thought and expression, informed the way I dressed and spoke, and shaped my cultural interests. Some of this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was inevitable and not all of it was bad, but in my experience the need to be affirmed by one's racial peers can take on a pathological dimension.

After many years I have come to see that until I became willing to risk the derision of the crowd, I had no chance to discover the most important truths about myself or indeed about life—to know and accept my "calling," to perceive what I really value and what goals are most worth striving for. In a perverse extension of the lesson taught by *Imitation of Life,* I have learned that one does not have to live surreptitiously as a Negro among whites in order to be engaged in a denial of one's genuine self for the sake of social acceptance. This is a denial which blacks often demand of each other as well.

I USED to be struck by the irony of blacks seeking to excommunicate other blacks for crimes against the race. I would relish the seeming contradiction: to the white working-class toughs waiting to punish with their fists my trespass onto their turf I was still a "nigger," but I could not be a "brother" to the middle-class black radicals with whom I shared history and circumstance. Just so, in the larger white society my racial identity was in no way conditional upon my espousing particular beliefs or values; whatever my political views or cultural interests, I would always be black in white America. Yet among other blacks my standing could be made conditional upon fidelity to the prevailing party line.

I would ponder this paradox, chafing at the restraint of an imposed racial uniformity, bemoaning the unfairness that I should have to face a threat of potential ostracism as punishment for the sin of being truthful to myself. In short, I would wallow in self-pity, which is always a waste of time.

Underlying my obsession with this paradox was a premise which I now believe to be mistaken: that being an authentic black person involves, in some elemental way, seeing oneself as an object of mistreatment by white people, and participating with other blacks in collective consciousness of and struggle against that mistreatment. This put me in a bind. For as my own evolving understanding of our history began to clash with the black consensus, and my definition of the struggle took a different, more conservative form than that popular among other black intellectuals, I found myself cut off from the group, my racial *bona fides* put into question. I was forced to choose—between my intellectual integrity on the one hand and, on the other hand, my access to that collective consciousness which I saw as essential to my black identity. Like Woody, lacking social confirmation of my subjective sense of self, I was left uncertain about who I really was.

I no longer believe that the camaraderie engendered among blacks by the collective experience of racism constitutes an adequate basis for any person's self-definition. Only in the most superficial way am I made "black" by virtue of being the object of a white racist's hate. The empathetic exchange of survivors' tales among "brothers," even the collective struggle against the clear wrong of racism, does not provide a tableau sufficiently rich to give meaning and definition to the totality of my life. I am so much more than the one who has been wronged, misunderstood, underestimated, derided, or ignored by whites. I am more than the one who has struggled against this oppression and indifference; more than a descendant of slaves now claiming freedom; more, that is, than a "colored person" (as seen by the racist) or than a "person of color" (as seen by the anti-racist).

Who am I, then? Foremost, I am a child of God, created in His image, imbued with His spirit, endowed with His gifts, set free by His grace. The most important challenges and opportunities which confront me derive not from my racial condition, but rather from my human condition. I am a husband, a father, a son, a teacher, an intellectual, a Christian, a citizen. In none of these roles is my race irrelevant, but neither can racial identity alone provide much guidance for me in discharging these responsibilities adequately. The particular features of my social condition, the external givens, merely set the stage of my life, they do not provide a script. That script must be internally generated; it must be the product of a reflective deliberation about the meaning of my life for which no political or ethnic program can ever substitute.

To shift the metaphor slightly, the socially contingent features of my situation—my racial heritage and family background, the prevailing attitudes toward race and class of those with whom I share this society—are the building blocks, the raw materials, out of which I must construct the edifice of my life. The expression of my individual personality is to be found elsewhere, in the blueprint I employ to guide this project of construction. Devising such a blueprint, a plan for one's life, is a task which confronts all people, whatever their race, class, or ethnicity. By solving this task we give meaning and substance to our lives. In my view, a personal identity wholly dependent on racial contingency falls tragically short of its potential because it embraces too parochial a conception of what is possible, and of what is desirable.

Thus, ironically, to the extent that individual blacks see themselves primarily through a racial lens, they sacrifice possibilities for the kind of personal development that would ultimately further their collective, racial interests. Blacks cannot be truly free men and women while laboring under a definition of self derived from the perceptual view of their oppressors and confined to the contingent facts of their oppression. In *A*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, James Joyce says of Irish nationalism:

> When a soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by these nets. . . .

It seems to me that, too often, a search for some mythic authentic blackness works similarly to hold back young black souls from flight into the open skies of American society. Of course there is the constraint of racism holding them back. But the trick, as Joyce knew, is to turn such "nets" into wings, to fly by them. One cannot do that if one refuses to see that ultimately it is neither external constraint nor expanded opportunity, but rather an in-dwelling spirit, which makes such flight possible.

LAST winter, on a clear, cold Sunday afternoon, my three-year-old son and I were walking in the woods near our New England home. We happened upon a small pond which, having frozen solid, made an ideal skating rink. Dozens of men, ranging in age from late teens to early thirties, were distributed in clusters across the ice, playing or preparing to play hockey. They glided over the pond's surface, skillfully passing and defending, stopping and turning on a dime, moving with such power, speed, and grace that we were spellbound watching them. Little Glenn occasionally squealed with delight as he marveled at one astounding feat after another, straining against my grip which alone prevented him from running out on the ice to join in the fun.

The men were white—every last one of them. Few took notice of us at the pond's edge, and those who did were not particularly generous with their smiles. Or so, at least, it seemed to me. I sensed that we were interlopers, that we would not necessarily have been welcome even if we had come with sticks and skates. But this may be wrong; I do not really know what they thought of our presence; no words were exchanged. I do know that my son very much enjoyed the game, and I thought to myself that the day would come, too soon, when he would want a pair of skates of his own and would ask his dad to teach him how to use them.

I found myself consciously dreading that day; the thought of my son playing hockey on that frozen pond did not sit well with me. I much preferred to think of him on a basketball court. For hockey, we all know, is a white man's game. Who was the last "brother" to play in the NHL? Of course, I immediately sensed that this thought was silly and illegitimate, and attempted to banish it from my mind. But it kept coming back. I could not avoid the feeling that something important was at stake here, and I decided to discuss it with my wife.

Linda and I had carefully considered the implications for our children of our decision to buy a house in a predominantly white suburb. We had joined and become active in a church with many black families like our own, in part so that our boys would be provided with suitable racial peers. We mean to ensure their proper education in black history and culture, including their own family history. We are vigilant about the effect on their developing psyches of racial messages that come across on television, in books, at their nursery school, and so forth. On all of this Linda and I are in full accord. But she thought my concerns about hockey were taking things a bit too far.

I now believe that she was right. My aversion to Glenn's becoming involved in that Sunday-afternoon ritual was rooted in my own sense of identity as a black American man who grew up when and where I did, with the experiences I had. Because *I* would not have felt comfortable there (I reasoned), *he* should not want to be a part of that scene, either. I was thus inclined to impose upon my son, in the name of preserving his authentic blackness, a limitation deriving from my life but not really relevant to his. It is as if I were to insist that he study Swahili instead of French.

Given the class background of our children and the community in which we have chosen to make our lives, their racial sensibilities will inevitably be quite different from ours. Moreover, it is impossible to predict just what self-definition they will settle upon. This can be disquieting for those of our generation concerned about retaining a "genuinely black" identity in the face of the social mobility we have experienced within our lifetimes. But it is not, I think, to be feared.

Much more frightening, to me, is the alternative—stifling the development of our children's personalities by imposing upon them an invented ethnicity. I have no doubt that my sons will be black men of the 21st century, but not because they will sing racial anthems peculiar to our time. Theirs will be a blackness constructed yet again, out of the external givens of their lives, not mine, shaped by a cultural inheritance which I am obliged to transmit but expressed in their own voices, and animated by a spirit whose basis lies deeper than the color of any man's skin.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Their Lustration—And Ours

George Weigel

WHEN Hitler's Germany was defeated in 1945, there was little doubt in anyone's mind that if a democratic regime were to be established in that country (or at least the part of it under Western control), a period of "denazification" would be necessary. Thus, with very broad support in the United States, a process was set into motion involving the prosecution at Nuremberg of the major Nazi criminals, as well as the rooting-out of lesser functionaries who had served the Nazi regime, even if they had not actually committed crimes themselves.

All this stands in the sharpest possible contrast to what has happened since the defeat of European Communism, the other great totalitarian system of our time. So far as criminal acts committed under Communism are concerned, what Zbigniew Brzezinski pointed out nearly two years ago remains true:

> To this day, though we have been saturated with revelation after revelation of the monumental scale of Stalinist crimes, literally not one, not even one Stalinist murderer has been punished for Stalinist crimes anywhere by anyone!

Yet even much milder efforts of "decommunization" have not only been sharply resisted within the former Communist countries themselves, but have also been denounced in the U.S., where very similar efforts as applied to Germany were once so widely applauded.

In Russia, for example, when President Boris Yeltsin did to the Communist party what was done to the Nazi party in postwar Germany—namely, ban it as a criminal organization—a group of Communists challenged this action in court as unconstitutional. As the trial opened, the well-known American specialist on Soviet affairs, Professor Stephen F. Cohen of Princeton, speaking from Moscow, told the New York *Times* that "This country has had too many political trials already, and this one will have a chilling effect on the development of democracy here." Would an American professor have said anything like this in Berlin in 1946?

GEORGE WEIGEL is president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. His new book, *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism*, will be published by Oxford University Press later this month.

The decommunization issue has also arisen in one form or another in the former Soviet satellites of Central and Eastern Europe. In Poland and what used to be known as the German Democratic Republic, the focus has been on the exposure of people listed in secret-police files as informers or collaborators; in Ukraine, the relation between leaders of the Orthodox church and the KGB has become an especially neuralgic point.

But the case generating the most attention in the U.S. has been the so-called *lustrace* (or vetting)* law passed by the federal parliament of Czechoslovakia in October 1991. Hence a review of the background of this law and of the debate it has provoked provides a window of special clarity into the argument over post-Communist accountability—both in Eastern Europe and in the U.S.

2.

IN THE euphoria following the collapse of Communism in Czechoslovakia, it might have been hoped that the moral reckoning with the past would come quickly, even naturally, as a result of the revolution of conscience which had preceded and made possible the Velvet Revolution of 1989. But the corruption was too deep and too pervasive for that. The managers and principal beneficiaries of the *ancien régime* did not go gracefully; in the main, they did not go at all. As the new president of Czechoslovakia, Václav Havel, put it in October 1991:

> Those involved in one way or another with the totalitarian system were given a magnanimous opportunity. They could leave their posts quietly and inconspicuously. Nothing would have happened to them. They could have reflected on the roles they had played. They had enough opportunities to do so. They have not made use of this opportunity. They have just perked up. They have settled down in various new posts and positions and have even started to laugh at us. . . . This has aroused general dissatisfaction, nervousness, when people see the selfsame people who were humiliating and persecuting them in various ways for years still sitting in various offices, occupying leading posts in farm cooperatives, district authorities,

* The word also suggests cleansing, as in the English "lustration."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> local and municipal administration, ministries, and the like, and they are working using the selfsame methods to which they had become accustomed. They behave toward people in the same arrogant way as they did before.

And again, several months later:

> I am very concerned by something that I have been hearing for two years: that various *nomenklatura* clans—including members of the former State Security—still control many enterprises and offices, continue to enrich themselves illegally, continue to invest stolen money, and continue happily to rule over those who have always lived honest lives. Those people take advantage of the fact that we have not managed early enough and with enough emphasis to part ways with the past and to restrict the influence of all those who actively co-created that past.

In these circumstances something clearly had to be done, for to do nothing would have meant consigning the new Czechoslovak democracy to the death of a thousand cuts: the knife, in this instance, being the dull blade of cynicism, slicing away at the body politic until it bled to death, morally and politically. Out of these considerations was born the *lustrace* law passed in October 1991.

Its aim was not revenge; its aim was to secure and consolidate the transitions to democracy and the free economy that had begun with the Velvet Revolution. The new law proposed to do this by restoring public confidence in the basic fairness of the machinery of governance, and by preventing former Communist officials, state-security (StB) agents, and their collaborators from sabotaging democratic and market reforms.

In light of the subsequent charges of "witch hunt" (with the inevitable overtones of McCarthyism that such charges carry in the American context), it is important to clarify just what the *lustrace* law does *not* do, as well as what it does.

It does not ban former Communists and collaborators from employment.

It does not impose criminal sanctions for past actions.

It does not remove pension claims or rights.

It does not forbid anyone from running for the federal parliament.

It does not forbid anyone from publishing.

It does not forbid anyone from speaking.

It does not forbid anyone from organizing.

It does not exile anyone.

What does the *lustrace* law do, then?

By requiring a "clean" certification from the federal Ministry of the Interior (which controls the old party and StB files), the law bans former high-ranking Communists, and former StB members and collaborators, from employment for a period of five years in key sectors of the society. (These include the federal police and internal-security forces, the senior courts, and the upper levels of the state administration, the armed services, state-owned enterprises, and state radio and television.) Those currently employed in these posts who fail to provide such a certification must leave them within fifteen days; applicants for the same posts who lack the required certification are simply not hired. (But two levels of appeal, administrative and then judicial, are available.)

Considering the Communist repression and corruption to which it is a response, the law is remarkably lenient. It lays down none of the civil penalties involved in the denazification program in postwar Germany; nor are there to be any criminal trials of the sort held at Nuremberg. (The law, incidentally, is also far less severe in its impact than the measures taken during the occupation of Japan, by which the United States "purged" some 220,000 public figures, banning them from public office at any level and also from important *private*-sector positions, which are unaffected by the *lustrace* law.)

Moreover, it should be noted that many of the state-owned enterprises in Czechoslovakia are privatizing, and employment in senior positions in them will not fall under the law's ban. And even within the state-run enterprises, those in high-ranking positions need not leave; they can accept lower positions if they wish. Similarly, an army colonel could accept a demotion to major and remain in the service.

Critics of the law (like the former dissident and recent Czechoslovakian Foreign Minister Jiri Dienstbier) have claimed that it is based on the notion of "collective guilt." This claim is particularly provocative in the Central European context, given recent history and the depredations of both the Nazi and Communist regimes in the region. But it is not so easy to find the kernel of moral persuasiveness within the husk of this particular bit of rhetoric. After all, people prospered in the higher echelons of the Communist party and the StB, and collaborated with the latter, not by accident of birth or race, but by choice. Thus the guilt in question is individual, not "collective."

Critics also charge that the *lustrace* law violates what they take to be a fundamental "democratic norm," namely, the presumption of innocence. But since the law does not involve a criminal proceeding, it is not altogether clear why the canons appropriate to criminal law should be considered normative here. (It should also be remembered that at least one established democracy, France, does not include a "presumption of innocence" in its criminal law.)

In any event, it is not easy to see what procedure would have more satisfactorily removed from power, during the crucial period of democratic and free-market consolidation, people who had been the prime beneficiaries, and in many

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cases the active agents, of the old regime's crimes and persecutions—and who, in far too many instances, remained in positions of power and influence. Some have suggested that a case-by-case review process, involving what would amount to a virtual criminal charge against an officeholder or applicant for a post, would have been less problematic. But Pavel Bratinka, a former dissident who led the parliamentary struggle for the law, argues precisely the opposite.

Bratinka thinks that a host of inquisitorial tribunals investigating and passing judgment on every senior job-holder or applicant would have been more humiliating for the individuals in question, and more susceptible to corruption (since "charges" would, presumably, have been brought to such tribunals by people who might have had various axes to grind). It would also have taken an extraordinary amount of time, during which the problems (uncovered in July 1991 by a parliamentary investigative commission) of mafia-like *nomenklatura* conspiracies, racketeering, and theft would have continued unabated, and public cynicism about the democratic prospect would have sunk to new depths.

At first glance, the *lustrace* law may appear vulnerable to the criticism that it does not differentiate between levels of guilt, and therefore levels of accountability, for former senior party members and for StB operatives and collaborators. Yet in fact the law does distinguish between "big fish" (who are banned) and "little fish" (who are not), in terms of party membership. As for StB collaborators, the law's terms of reference are rather carefully defined to ban those who participated in the most odious activities, which required deliberate choices to persecute or to collaborate in persecution.

A more serious problem is that the law does not provide adequately for former Communist officials who made a clean break with the party after the Prague Spring of 1968; this, though, could be remedied by amendment. There is also the question of the reliability of StB files—although file-rigging can presumably be caught, and "positive" vettings based on rigged files can be reversed, in the appeals process.

3.

IT IS easy enough to understand why the *lustrace* law, mild though it is, should have provoked a heated debate within Czechoslovakia, where so many people—some of them perhaps innocent of any real wrongdoing—are in danger of being hurt by it. One can also understand why even some former dissidents have come out against the law: they would rather put the past behind them than go on struggling with it indefinitely. But it is not so easy to understand why the law has consistently been attacked in the United States.

According to Stephen Engelberg of the New York *Times*, for example, the entire issue of post-Communist accountability has been "fanned and perpetuated by self-serving politicians." Czechoslovakia and the other countries of the old Warsaw Pact are, Engelberg says,

> in the midst of a painful economic transition, so politicians are strongly tempted to divert attention from the grim reality to "decommunization." If they cannot deliver bread, why not the heads of a few supposedly fat Communists?

Even Jeri Laber of Helsinki Watch, who diligently and forcefully chronicled the depredations of the StB for years, has joined in the denunciation of the *lustrace* law. Writing in the *New York Review of Books*, she declares that the law has led to a "witch hunt" and a public atmosphere of rumor-mongering, revenge, and fear. "Rather than judge," she adds elsewhere, "they [the Czechs and Slovaks] should seek a general healing." But as Havel, himself a critic of certain aspects of the *lustrace* law, once put it:

> It would be very unhealthy if we were to say that what's done is done. This might be the simplest way out, but this is a sore which has to be lanced.

As for Laber's charge of a "witch hunt," her colleagues in the British Helsinki Human Rights Group had this to say:

> Unlike witches and unlike the subversives who, in Senator McCarthy's febrile imagination, peopled the State Department, members of the Politburo and secret policemen did exist in Czechoslovakia between 1948 and 1989. Czechs and Slovaks at every level know that the StB and its informers distorted their lives and preserved a totalitarian regime in power [for] four decades.

The particularities and merits of the argument over the *lustrace* law aside, however, what we see here is a symptom of how sensitive the question of accountability in the aftermath of Communism has become even for us in the United States. We, of course, do not have the problem of dealing with the remnants of a totalitarian regime. But we do have our own post-Communist hangover, and it takes the form of an extreme reluctance to tally up the moral balance sheet at the end of the cold war, and to assess who got things right and who got things wrong.

A RECENT, and very blatant, manifestation of the hangover came this past May in the approbation, even enthusiasm, with which the American political class, the business and cultural elite, and the prestige press responded to Mikhail Gorbachev's attempt to rewrite the history of the cold war from the very

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

podium in Fulton, Missouri, at which Winston Churchill once lamented the fact that "from Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended" on Europe. But "iron curtain" was an image Gorbachev took pains to avoid—as, evidently, did those businessmen, foundation executives, politicians, and editorialists who fawned over him. Indeed, rather than remember the terrible facts of the recent past, Gorbachev's message, similar to that which he peddled while in office, was that there were no winners or losers in the cold war, only "victims" who had been released from their common bondage.

Now that may be a comforting thought to the likes of Jimmy Carter's adviser for disarmament, Paul Warnke, who will find in it confirmation of his image of the cold-war superpowers as "two apes on a treadmill." And one suspects that Gorbachev's spin-doctoring of the recent past was not entirely distasteful to those editors at the New York *Times* who had suggested on more than one occasion that the last General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the *de-facto* leader of humankind. But Gorbachev's rendering of the origins and dynamics of the cold war blatantly distorts the historical record, insults the memory of the victims of Communism, and demeans the sacrifices of blood and treasure that the American people made to see through the long war against Communist totalitarianism that they first engaged in earnest with the enunciation of the Truman Doctrine in 1947.

For if there were, in truth, no "winners" or "losers" in the cold war, then there was no real contest between the United States and its allies on the one side, and the Soviet Union and its epigones on the other; and if there was no real contest, then there were no grave issues of right and wrong, decency and depravity, at stake between us; and if there were no such issues in the contest, then there is no reason to remember the immediate past as anything but a foul nightmare, and no need to assess the responsibilities of those who claimed to understand our situation and prescribe policy for it.

But that is neither the way things were, nor the way they are. The struggle between imperfect democracies and pluperfect despotisms was fraught with peril for the future of freedom. It made all the difference in the world—literally—that the West won the cold war, and that the Communists lost. If that claim is regarded as arrogant, or untoward, or embarrassing in the House Democratic Caucus, or in certain quarters of the White House, or at the Turner Broadcasting Corporation, it is taken as a simple statement of the truth among the people behind the old iron curtain who (at great peril to their lives) brought off the Revolution of 1989 and the New Russian Revolution of August 1991—thus immeasurably enhancing the security of the United States. One might have thought that the debt of gratitude we owe to these people required us to pay more attention to their account of the cold war than to Gorbachev's. Furthermore, it seems highly unlikely that the United States will have anything sensible to say about the future of a post-Communist world order unless it clears its mind on the realities, and the moral meaning, of the immediate past.

Such an examination of public conscience will not require a *lustrace* law. But it will require an act of memory, and a public conversation about accountability. And as for remembering, it is not McCarthyism, but simple intellectual honesty, to note, with chagrin, that many of the key culture-forming institutions of American public life did rather badly in the post-Vietnam phase of the cold war.

THERE were, to begin with, the churches. Against the counsel of brave dissidents among their own co-religionists behind the iron curtain, mainline/oldline Protestantism and its chief ecumenical agencies, the National and World Councils of Churches, taught the morality of accommodation and participated in the propaganda activities of crude front organizations like the Christian Peace Conference.*

The Catholic Church's American leadership was only marginally better during the 1980's. Pope John Paul II was a great influence on the moral revolution that set the foundations for the political revolution of 1989, but the Catholic bishops of the United States could make no such claim on their own behalf. Like their Protestant confreres, the bishops, in their famous 1983 pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace," largely accepted the political logic of the nuclear-freeze movement and its one-eyed focus on weapons, not regimes. Two years later, the bishops (whose policy statements persistently reflected the orthodoxies of the arms-control mandarins) expressed grave reservations about the Strategic Defense Initiative—which most leaders of the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe regard today as a crucial factor in resolving the end-game of the cold war in their favor.

Nor was it on matters of nuclear weapons and U.S.-Soviet relations alone that the churches proved to be deficient moral mentors. Throughout the 1980's, domestic resistance to the application of the anti-Communist/pro-democracy Reagan Doctrine in Central America was primarily based in the churches—and this despite the persecution of the Catholic Church in Nicaragua by the Sandinista regime.

Then there was the American philanthropic

* It is worth noting briefly that the Protestant churches that did not go down this ideological path in the 1980's—the evangelicals—grew dramatically during that decade, while the mainline/oldline continued to hemorrhage congregants.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

community. Though one of the distinctive ornaments of American democracy, it, too, has considerable reason to examine its conscience in the aftermath of the cold war. For it, too, in the early 1980's, listened to the siren songs of "nuclear winter" as sung by the likes of Jonathan Schell and Carl Sagan, and poured tens (perhaps even hundreds) of millions of dollars into "preventing nuclear war." Possibly a few interesting books thereby got written, but does anyone wish to argue seriously that the anti-nuclear agitations paid for by the MacArthur Foundation and the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation had any real impact on the collapse of Communism—which was, indisputably, the *sine qua non* for the end of the nuclear arms race? Have any of the grant-makers who insisted that the issue was weapons, not regimes, taken stock of their responsibility for the expenditure of vast sums of money on a chimera?

The last decade of the cold war also witnessed the moral-political deconstruction of certain of the professions. There is no need here to rehearse the various styles of political and moral myopia that beset the American professoriate as the phenomenon of "tenured radicals" took hold on the campuses. But these follies were hardly limited to the universities. Indeed, doctors and lawyers, regurgitating themes from the campuses and the anti-American-nuclear-weapons movement, soon discovered that they had a similar responsibility for "preventing nuclear war," primarily by inveighing against Western security policy.

The mindset that dominated two typically accommodationist groups in the 1980's, Physicians for Social Responsibility and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), was nicely (if crudely) captured at Stanford in 1987, where one IPPNW founder, Dr. Herbert Abrams, dismissed the recently-released Soviet dissident Yuri Orlov as an "arrogant son of a bitch": Orlov had had the temerity to raise cautions about the relationship between regime-approved international exchanges (like those conducted by IPPNW) and the machinery of totalitarian control in the USSR.

The 1985 exchange agreement between the American Bar Association and the Association of Soviet Lawyers was another exercise in immoral accommodationism. The Soviet "association" was a well-known propaganda organ, led at the time by Samuel Zivs, a notorious anti-Semite whose secondary specialization was the defamation of Andrei Sakharov. But when a small band of dissenters challenged the propriety of the exchange agreement, they were dismissed as "noisy . . . insignificant . . . [and] misguided" by a leading light of the American bar; another legal worthy hailed the pact, on its expiration, as "extremely successful." (At what?, one wanted to ask then, and now.)

FINALLY, there was the fourth estate. It, too, had drunk deeply from the wells of anti-anti-Communism in the wake of Vietnam. And that draught led to a pattern of coverage and commentary whose apogee (or perigee) was the description by NBC's John Chancellor of the Soviet Union in a broadcast from Moscow on the day after the coup failed last August:

> It's short of soap, so there are lice in hospitals. It's short of pantyhose, so women's legs go bare. It's short of snowsuits, so babies stay home in winter. . . . The problem isn't Communism; nobody even talked about Communism this week. The problem is shortages.

(Imagine Edward R. Murrow standing in the rubble of Berlin in May 1945, and saying, "The problem isn't Nazism; nobody even talked about Nazism this week. The problem is shortages.")

In trying to account for the curious performance of the media in the end-game of the cold war, it is important to understand how anti-anti-Communism at the level of ideology intersected with a new concept of the press's function in American society. The Watergate experience (and its subsequent cinematic romanticization) had moved "investigative reporting" from a specialty to the heart of the reportorial enterprise: the assumption was that the government (the American government, that is) was always lying, and that the task of the journalist was to expose its habitual fraud and mendacity. This is why the press could spend an inordinate amount of time ferreting about in the Iran-*contra* imbroglio while paying scant attention to a story of infinitely greater consequence: the beginnings of the unraveling of the Soviet imperial system.

Even the probes that were made into that world-historical situation were discolored by the media's evident preference for Mikhail Gorbachev over Ronald Reagan. Thus the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, a paper which had once supported that great cold warrior, Senator Henry M. Jackson, could editorialize in these terms after the 1988 Moscow summit:

> Reagan's insistence on making the abuse of human rights in the Soviet Union and the mistreatment of Soviet dissidents a major summit issue could have wrecked the summit, but Gorbachev to his credit wouldn't let it.

The common thread through these disparate but related phenomena—the sentimentalism of the churches, the foolishness of the great foundations, the corruption of the professions, and the incomprehension of the media—was a failure of moral imagination and nerve in which fear of nuclear holocaust, and fear of a democratically elected Reagan administration, played large roles. The survivalism of the early 1980's was, to be sure, only a long-winded variant on the old

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

slogan, "Better Red than Dead." But where an earlier generation of the cultural elite, faced with the threat of Soviet totalitarianism, produced Dean Acheson, containment, and NATO, this generation produced *The Fate of the Earth*, the nuclear-freeze movement, and Physicians for Social Responsibility, and vigorously promoted all three as exemplars of moral sensitivity.

The great irony, of course, is that much of the American intellectual and cultural elite lost its moral nerve at precisely the point in the cold war at which Central and East European dissident intellectuals were regaining theirs. While American academics and columnists were teaching that Harry Truman had started the cold war and that Ronald Reagan was needlessly prolonging it, Vaclav Havel was emphasizing the necessity of "living in the truth" as the antidote to Czechoslovak Communism. While the churches of the mainline/oldline urged the morality of appeasement, Adam Michnik (a secularized Jewish intellectual) was stressing the importance for Poland of a recovery of the Christian notion of self-sacrifice. (That Havel and Michnik were men of the Left only intensified the irony.) While participation in the anti-nuclear agitations of the 1980's was considered, among many American intellectuals, a moral imperative, one of the most devastating moral critiques of the mentality of Western "peace" activists was penned by none other than Havel.*

The Central and East European intellectuals had grasped, in other words, a moral truth that many American intellectuals and professionals had forgotten: that only a life lived "in the truth," even if that meant a life at risk, was worthy of a human being. The Central and Eastern Europeans (under the pressure of a stultifying public atheism) had also grasped something that their more genteelly secularized American colleagues seemed to have forgotten: that "living in the truth" meant holding oneself accountable to transcendent moral norms. And, finally, the dissident intellectuals had grasped a practical truth that eluded many American tastemakers: that it was better to be neither Red nor dead, and that the odds on avoiding both slavery and incineration improved if one took account of the totalitarian nature of the adversary, and worked to change that.

What should be done about all this? In our circumstances, the legal system is no remedy. But taking a cue from one part of the Czechoslovak *lustrace* law, perhaps one might suggest that those American intellectuals and publicists who got it so desperately wrong in the end-game of the cold war should in all decency volunteer to maintain a repentant silence: for five years.

---

* In his largely-ignored 1985 essay, "The Anatomy of a Reticence," originally published in *samizdat* and now available in a collection of Havel's essays, *Open Letters* (1991).

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Love and Loyalty

A Story

Ruth R. Wisse

DEAR B.,

This is about as far away from you as I will ever be. I'm at the cottage on the lake, deserted now at the beginning of September by all but the heartiest of the summer people. I came out here to close the place after the rest of the family went home to Montreal. Once I'd stripped the beds and polished the kitchen and vacuumed the floors and scoured the toilets, I felt I deserved a swim, so I put on a bathing suit and went down to the lake in the hour that Hebrew calls "between the suns." A chipmunk scampered out of my way down the stairs and under the porch. An unseasonal fly brushed my arm as I crossed the grass to the dock. After that, everything was so still that no matter how smooth I tried to make my strokes they sliced the water like a defilement. I swam for what seemed a very long time when, suddenly, I heard the love-sick trilling of the loon on the other side of the bay. That loon's cry is making me wild.

Normally the loon utters a long call, like a small *shofar* on the High Holidays. I listen to it sometimes in the middle of the night, wondering how a solitary sound can be so soothing. I imagine the trees, black silhouettes, framing the water, the moon barely visible from behind the clouds, and that motionless, elegant bird illuminated in a peacefulness as rich as Eden's. If I can persuade myself that I am similarly suspended on the cool water among the tall trees, I fall back into a calm sleep.

The loons around here have grown quite tame. When we first began coming to the Adirondacks I thought they were extinct; only their images were preserved on regional postcards and doorstops. Nowadays, it looks as though the Parks Commission has won at least part of its battle for the preservation of the environment. When you row out on the lake a loon may approach to within an oar's length of the boat and wait there to be admired. They don't seem to mind intrusions on even their deepest privacy. This late in the year, I don't suppose it could be the cry of their mating I hear out there in the bay, but still its vibration stirs the blood.

Stirs my blood. As at that other shore at Dahab when we uttered small cries of our own. I haven't thought about that night for years (after years of thinking about that night) and I wasn't eager to be reminded of it, let alone out here among the horny loons. But now that the memory's pierced me, I'm crazy with restlessness like a teenager, may God help me. I've tried so hard to discipline my wayward desires (quack, quack), to wear what my children call teacher's shoes, to let my hair turn gray as proof of aging flesh (quack, quack), to walk five miles a day, play sweaty tennis, perform many pious deeds to tame the beast within (quack, quack)—and I really *am* middle-aged, besides.

That quacking, incidentally, is an invention not of mine but of Saul Bellow in one of his novels. When I first came upon his aging man's mockery of an ageless man's desire, I laughed, as a young woman does who imagines the bird is in pursuit of *her*. But by now the laughter has died.

I'VE never understood how I could have spent almost the whole of that first day in your presence without noticing you. Let me say in self-defense that the scene greeting me at the parking lot when I turned up at 6 A.M. was so different from what I had expected that it took me quite a while to get my bearings. Believe it or not, I was by then looking forward to solitude. My husband was holed up in a Jerusalem legal office with the battling parties who were one of the reasons for our trip to Israel; instead of the two days he had thought the deal would take to straighten out, he would be lucky to have things cleared up by the time we were scheduled to return to Montreal. Unaccountably, this hurtled me down a chute of self-pity. I had arranged for babysitters back home, planned two weeks of meals and activities for the kids so that my husband and I could take a bit of vacation, and there I was, at the end of summer, with a full year of teaching awaiting me back home and without the excursion I had been promised. So I decided to take one on my own.

I thought of traveling through the Galilee, but

RUTH R. WISSE, a veteran contributor to COMMENTARY, is professor of Yiddish literature at McGill University. The present story, in somewhat different form, will appear as the final chapter of her new book, *If I Am Not for Myself . . .: The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews*, to be published this month by the Free Press. Copyright © 1992 by Ruth R. Wisse.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Hofsteins recommended a Sinai trip like the one they had taken over Passover, and that's how I got the idea of six days in the desert. Their descriptions were all of sand and sea—the only human element they mentioned was the storehouse of the bones of deceased monks at the monastery of Santa Katherina. About the climb up Mount Sinai, advertised as the climax of the trip, they said nothing, though they did allow that I might be interested in seeing where Jewish civilization was presumably fashioned. It never occurred to me until I showed up at dawn with my borrowed sleeping bag and canteen and saw the two open trucks filling with people that this was not going to be a solitary adventure but an extended overnight camping trip, the sort of thing that in my countless seasons at summer camp I would have gone to any lengths to avoid.

What a disaster! Once again I had been robbed of my promised vacation, only this time I had no one to blame but myself and my own lack of imagination. The worst moment occurred when one of the guides invited all English speakers to get into one truck and all French speakers into the other; and because French speakers were in the minority, would those of us who understood French be good enough to join the second group, so that we could travel with our appropriate guide? Oh God! A guide! Lectures on the habits of the Bedouin, and on the hieroglyphics of the ancient Habiru! And in French!—because, of course, on vacation or not, and no matter how choked with dismay, I could never resist an appeal to my civic duty. Before the outsized jeep even turned a wheel, I had given up any hope of pleasure.

I suppose that's the best way to set out on any venture—drained of hope, dumb, sore, miserable. I found myself an outside seat in back where the sand and dust soon began to transform me into a caked desert creature. For a couple of hours the only use I made of my mouth was to sip regularly, as instructed, from the canteen. By the time we stopped at our first watering hole—a shack along the road with an outhouse in back and something frying on a hot plate in the broiling sun—my spirits had begun to improve. The parched texture of my hair and jeans and the inside of my throat reassured me that civilization was being left behind.

And naturally, no sooner did my craving for solitude begin to be satisfied than it yielded to curiosity. In front of me sat a pair of kibbutz girls, awarded this trip as a treat between high school and the army. This much I made out from their fumbling conversation in French with the chatterbox who sat beside them. The girl directly in front of me had a rosy neck with a marvelously thick black braid, while the one on the inside was blond and tanned, as though she had already spent the summer on army maneuvers.

What made me notice the dark one especially was the way she kept stealing a look at our driver, Dudu. If you recall, he stopped the car once on a rise above Jericho to tell us something about the city, and he could claim a girl's interest, no doubt of that. He was short, muscular, and bronze, and as I had watched him change from jeans to bathing trunks before he got into the driver's seat I knew there was no line either at belly or thigh to indicate any lighter color of skin. I linger on his physique because there was little else about him to compete for attention. Black Braid in front of me seemed smitten on the spot; the fantasy she would spin out for the next few days would, I thought, probably constitute her first real brush with love.

Still, at that point I wasn't really looking around. I did learn that the chatterbox was a lapsed nun from a convent in Switzerland. Behind me were an Italian father and son and beside them two French fellows making a play for Janie, the sophomore from Harvard. I heard a French Canadian accent that later turned out to belong to a teacher from Trois Rivières. The pair beside me, honeymooners, slept. Do you remember any of this?

It was when we picked up those two French couples in Eilat that you first caught my eye. I wish I could say it was you that I noticed—what I noticed was your reaction to them. Had this been a movie, the music would have soared, along with your expressive eyebrow, marking the onset of The Plot. Even today, at a remove of twenty years, I see those four people coming toward us from the hotel, so utterly implausible that either they or we would have had to be embarrassed by our encounter—and they, like royalty, were not about to be embarrassed.

The men were strictly accompaniment: two studs in aviator glasses with gold trim that matched the white-and-gold pattern of their shirts. They looked as if they had been making for the ocean and had stumbled inland by mistake. The woman on the arm of the stouter, rough-looking man was the most beautiful I had ever seen, her hair that cascade of yellow and gold that you see in commercials for expensive shampoos. Her face was perfectly serene, like the surface of the lake here in front of me or a baby's smile after nursing. Her skin was honey, and so much of it in view! She was wearing iridescent blue-and-silver satin shorts in a style I saw featured in *Vogue* the following summer, and a halter of matching white satin. The contents of the latter would have seemed as satisfactory as all the rest of her had it not been for the woman beside her, dressed almost identically, but with large, softly bobbing breasts that every male hand must have been itching to steady. This second, dark lady had a hilly nose and pockmarked skin, but no pity needed to be wasted on her homeliness. Her breasts and the vitality that kept them in motion sent out a challenge of their own: *that* one may be made for the canvas, but I'm for the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sheets. And as though to complete the symmetry, hers was the handsomer of the two men.

What kept the breasts bobbing, then and for the rest of the trip, were the three-inch heels of her sandals. At the sight of those preposterous stilts our guides should have administered a brief lecture on the requirements of desert travel, promised a refund, and turned the foursome back. Hadn't the information leaflet specified good walking shoes and sensible dress for the kind of journey that had taken the children of Israel forty years to complete, and for a climb up the mountain where Moses was said to have conversed with God? Those heels were a breach of contract, an insult to us and to the desert. I suppose that they were also a sign of royalty, advertising its contempt for the bourgeoisie. Whatever, they had the effect of subduing us all. Our trained desert guides could no more have contravened the wishes of these imperious strangers than we could take our eyes off them. Obligingly, the guides loaded their Gucci luggage into the back of the truck, and helped those bimbos up the steps!

I was incensed, but you were amused. You must have recognized that any man with a bone in his body would have done the same. That's exactly what you said to me hours later when we were leaving the campfire. "You can't really blame the guides. Any man with a bone in his body would have done the same." How could I help falling in love with you?

There's time now—what else but time, now?—to ask you all the questions I didn't ask then: such as, what made you want me? How soon were you sure you had me? How much did you enjoy me? To tell the truth, though, the reassurance I once needed through this line of questioning has either been satisfied or else it has dissipated; my curiosity turns philosophical with age. Right now I'm wondering whether we would have acted so precipitously had those French sensualists not joined our company, and had we not been obliged to sit as involuntary witnesses in the rows behind them all that long first afternoon. The sight of them tossing cigarette butts and then empty cigarette packs over the side of the truck in defiance of the guides' explicit instructions and the ex-nun's tearful plea not to "torture the desert"—didn't that undermine our respect for the rules? Or Martine washing her painted toenails—her toenails!—with the water we had been told was as precious as diamonds? And when they caressed with fingertips and eyes, weren't they provoking our envy and taunting our modesty—and didn't they succeed?

Understand, I'm not looking for excuses here. Quite the contrary. Our adultery would have been shameful (as well as sinful) if I had known it was inspired by barbarians. I'm only wondering whether the behavior of those four didn't goad us into shedding some of the burdens of morality that we had brought with us on this trip, along with our solid walking shoes.

That first night, for example. Suppose that after supper the guides had gathered us around the campfire for the obligatory evening program and asked us to make our introductions. . . . Hello, I'm Anna from Indiana. Marie from Paree. Chaim from Yerushalayim. Nadiv from Tel Aviv. We would have sat there, you and I, as dutifully as we had sat all day long. We would have joined in the singing of "*Hava Nagila*" and "Everybody Loves Saturday Night," not merely complying with our group leaders but solicitous of their attempt to create the illusion of community among strangers. We would have shown *esprit de corps*—meaning the body collective rather than the body private. Finally, damped like the fire by so much induced enthusiasm, we would have gone to our separate sleeping bags under the stars. "Good night," we would have said to one another. "See you tomorrow."

But the guides had been intimidated. When the Frenchmen refused to do their assigned clean-up after supper, the guides fell back on a strategy of self-defense. Feigning indifference, they stuffed the potatoes back into the supply bags, doused the fire, sent us off to bed without song or story. We were left to fend for ourselves. You came over to me then and as we walked in the direction of the sleeping bags, you said there was no point in blaming the guides . . . intimating that all men are the same when the blood begins to pound. I was very happy to take the cue.

I was not a sexual novice by the time we met. In addition to many years of fruitful marriage there had been some brightening dalliances on otherwise miserable Montreal midwinter afternoons. I was also a serious reader: from texts of the sexual revolution that was then poisoning the atmosphere faster than acid rain I had been instructed that the real duty of a wife was not to her husband, but to her genitalia. As part of that dubious teaching I had been told about my natural right to satisfaction, and about techniques for achieving that satisfaction. Out there in the desert it was all beside the point. "*Vilde khaye*"—wild animal—my mother had shouted at me one day when as a teenager I went crashing in a rage around the kitchen. (She mistook my calculated rebellion against her for genuine loss of control.) With you I really did feel like a wild animal. I couldn't repossess my trembling body. I realized in myself the frightening properties of fire.

During the daytime we were very well behaved. We barely touched, as if to demarcate our moral and aesthetic distance from the two French couples. Toward the end of the second day, when as if by magic we came upon a shaded pool in a wadi and went in for a dip, our thighs happened to brush in the water and we swam apart as if burned. Without conferring, I think we both considered it a point of pride to remain undiscov-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ered for the duration of the trip. Maybe we even worked harder to prove ourselves good citizens. In the mornings I scoured the breakfast pans whether or not it was my turn. You were the first to leap down and help the guides when the truck developed a flat. Gradually, you began to be entrusted with some of their unraveled authority, and people with problems came to you instead of to them. The ex-nun wanted you to help arrange some privacy for body functions; you suggested that whenever we stopped for lunch or supper the trucks be placed in a certain formation and that an area beyond them be blocked off for "toilets." The guides went along with your solution. Having once yielded to semi-savages, they could hardly object to the demands of the hyper-civilized. You and I were the secret savages, swollen with pleasure at night, lean with restraint by day.

Have you ever read *Tristan and Isolde*, that profoundly un-Jewish love story? It ambushed me in a course on Romanticism during my sophomore year in college. Tristan the loyal servant is sent to bring back Isolde, the bride of his beloved master King Mark, much as in Chapter 24 of Genesis the servant of Abraham is instructed to seek out and bring back a bride for Isaac. But how different are the complications in the Gentile tale! The nurse who accompanies Isolde on her sea voyage (quite unlike the careful nurse who accompanies Rebecca) has taken along a magical love potion to be drunk by the king and his queen at their wedding, thus ensuring their abiding love. Before the destination is reached, however, there is a huge storm at sea, during which Tristan and Isolde accidentally slake their thirst with that magical drink. There is no help for them thereafter. "And they gave themselves up utterly to love."

Utterly! This same act of unholy fornication—which in the Bible carries the threat of punishment unto the tenth generation (because its consequences can so easily work their way unto the tenth generation)—the medieval narrator exalts for its tragic purity. He doesn't just bring these lovers together and shrug his shoulders at the fateful mistake; he adores their sin, the sin that will lead ineluctably to their deaths, and invites us to feel the frantic absolutism of their passion. Isolde, who betrays both men, looms as the holy grail of Tristan's quest. And Tristan, betrayer of the master to whom he has pledged obedience, is treated by the narrator almost as an erotic Christ. These earthly lovers are sanctified and doomed, paying with their martyrdom for an attachment of such intensity. Through the beauty of the text, their utter surrender to passion routs all notions of marital fidelity.

Much has been written about the political and religious meaning of this idea of love in the Western world, but its heretical effect on me was unmediated by any knowledge of its history or source. Had I been asked to describe love prior to the reading of *Tristan and Isolde*, I would have invoked the sturdy affection of my mother and father who held hands when they came to visit me one summer at camp, and whose marriage, crowded with bills and intestinal maladies, was as flawed as ordinary life tends to be. Came the Tristan legend to teach that forbidden love was not only stronger but ever so much "holier" than the sanctified kind. Thanks to you, I had a chance to test that proposition.

Did I say earlier that the two French couples seemed regal in their contempt for the rest of us? Only at first. Their physical grace and glittering attire set them apart for a time, but they were too coarse to keep our interest for very long and, in fact, once its novelty wore off, their vulgarity was as predictable as the public propriety of small-town churchgoers. You and I, on the other hand, became increasingly inventive through our duplicity. We spoke a double-tiered language, our innocent public utterance spiked with provocative private allusions. Making camp, breaking camp, preparing food—everything that involved our hands and fingers pointed to the night of pleasure ahead of us, and whenever our eyes caught in the process, became part of an extended foreplay. Because we kept it hidden, our attraction to one another acquired mysterious intensity, and we were like members of a secret sect whose superiority battens on their pretended normalcy. We became conspirators as well as lovers, and how can ordinary experience, even "ordinary" love, compete with the excitement of subterfuge? Pricked by the danger of discovery, and hallowed by intervals of abstinence, we gave ourselves up utterly to love.

IF I AM NOT mistaken, something changed in the nature of the trip the day we climbed Mount Sinai. By then, we had all grown accustomed to being ferried around by truck on a prearranged itinerary complete with "unexpected" discoveries of pools of rainwater in the wadis and ancient carvings on shielded rocks. Even our sudden encounter on day three with a small convoy of military jeeps among the sand dunes was probably no surprise to the guides, who must have been briefed about everything going on in the area. Whatever little we did for ourselves, such as building the fire and cleaning up, we were called upon to do as part of an established routine, but it wasn't we who planned the meals or decided how far we should travel each day. Once we had left behind the well-stocked vehicles, though, and set out on foot with our supplies on our backs, we reverted into the loose collection of individuals we had been originally, of varying sizes, shapes, levels of energy, spirit, and will. On foot, we resumed for the first time individual responsibility for our progress.

These adjustments might have gone very smoothly. By the standards of mountaineering Sinai is an easy climb, no more than two hours or so for good hikers. Tsvi, because he was the tallest

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

guide, would have stayed in front, setting the pace, pointing out to the eager climbers around him certain landmarks or quirks of the path. The second guide would have sustained the middle of the group with anecdotes or songs, while Dudu held up the rear with encouraging praise and reassurance. That, at any rate, was how we started out, and the ease with which the guides set the pattern suggests how often and effortlessly they had done it before.

Martine's high heels tripped them up. It began as a joke, her bobbing up the mountain supported by her two *pieds noirs* (as by then they had been dubbed) with the gorgeous Chantale giggling merrily alongside. The foursome had been functioning in any case as a group within the group, rarely speaking to the rest of us except to complain to the guides, and there was a certain relief in putting them out of sight at our rear. But as the peals of merriment kept falling farther behind, the groups were in danger of splitting off, and every time the guides tried to hold us back to keep those sounds within earshot, resentment at the front grew bolder. Why had she been allowed to come on the climb in defiance of all sanity and safety? Why should we respect the needs of people who didn't know the meaning of respect? How could trained guides have sacrificed all of us to the whims of one spoiled brat? The sandal-metronome kept slowing us down, until it stopped altogether and then news traveled up the line that one of the lady's heels had broken off and gone tumbling down the rocks. A chorus wished its owner a similar fate.

My God, how the pent-up furies exploded then! Everyone seemed to be shouting at once, down the mountain at Martine and her companions, at the guides, at one another. The Italian father swore that if Tsvi did not proceed immediately with him and his son and whoever else was ready to advance, he himself would lead the group. The anger I had felt when they first joined our company in Eilat, eclipsed by stronger emotions during the intervening days, was now back in a flash, and I too wanted to defy the guides by setting out for the top of the mountain at the fastest possible clip. I noticed that even for the honeymooning pair the idyll was suspended. The bridegroom was hollering that he would report the guides to the tour company for having endangered the group, and the bride sulked unbecomingly.

As I recall, two people stayed calm. One was the lapsed nun from Switzerland who began to make her way down the mountain to where Martine was stranded in her damaged slippers so that she might offer the distressed damsel the sturdy sandals off her own feet. Passing us on her way she explained that with her hardened soles and greater experience as a climber she could proceed barefoot, whereas Martine's handicap might force us all to abandon our project. When the plan was broached to Martine, she accepted as a matter of course, and pronounced the flat sandals not a bad fit. Pure egoists are the greatest beneficiaries of pure Christians. I was not as angry with Martine as I was with the nun—there was no point in referring to her any longer as "lapsed," because she was obviously still in the grip of the same self-abnegating idea that had impelled her to enter the convent.

I was angriest with the guides, for permitting this travesty. They allowed the nun to atone for *their* gross error of judgment. Instead of protecting her right to enjoy the trip she had paid for, they sacrificed her convenience for their own. You may have felt similarly dissatisfied, because with calm authority it was you who took over the leadership of the group from that point on. I don't know exactly what you said to the guides, but we were told to start moving ahead with you as our new anchor. Dudu would drop behind to oversee the foursome, now joined by the nun. If they ran into any more difficulties, he would summon help with his walkie-talkie, but otherwise they would proceed at their own pace, we at ours. If they couldn't make it to the top, they would return to the prearranged rendezvous where we would eventually rejoin them.

The day was well advanced by then, and the early start that was intended to give us a jump on the sun had been lost along with the broken heel. It grew hotter as we climbed. Despite the heat, we of the main group forced ourselves up at a very brisk pace, scampering over rocks, pulling one another up over difficult spots. Once or twice we were reminded to drink from our canteens, but otherwise no one said very much, neither the guides to explain nor we to inquire. At the narrowing top of the mountain we discovered, with a mixture of gratitude and annoyance, the carved steps into the stone and small railings of wood that previous travelers had provided at the steepest points. Their welcome assistance was a less than welcome reminder that we were part of a relentless tourist stream and that those following us, the likes of Martine and her companions, would in years to come undoubtedly agitate for a paved road or a chairlift for their greater convenience.

Then, abruptly, these small disturbing thoughts were interrupted. We had heaved ourselves out on the plateau and arrived at our destination. A lyric from my teenage folksinging days came unbidden to memory, drowning out all the more exalted phrases of Scripture: "If I could I surely would / Stand on the rock where Moses stood. . . ." There we were indeed, standing in the footsteps of Moses.

The landscape that greeted our eyes up there could not have changed very much in the millennia since Moses' sojourn: hills of yellowing orange, some slightly higher and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

some slightly lower than the mountain designated as Sinai, stretching out to the horizon beyond. If sand and wind had caused some alteration in the shape and hues of the surrounding hills and valleys, they hadn't reduced the expanse of barrenness. The scene from where we stood was nowhere as stark as, say, Mount Washington above the tree line where you crawl over blackening rocks and feel the frightening aspect of the original primeval chaos—the biblical *tohu vavohu*. I've never climbed the Himalayas or the Alps, those peaks that tempt ambitious human creatures to their glory or their doom. Sinai reminded me rather of the midrash that asks how so unassuming a mountain was given the honor of so remarkable an event. It was Moses who conferred grandeur on the mountain, not the mountain on Moses. When the Law was given to those who agreed to be bound by it, its reception transformed that otherwise ordinary mound of sand and stone into a holy site.

You made a comment there that I've never forgotten: you said it was a strange place to have conceived the Law. At the time, I was touched by your apparent identification with Moses as a fellow "lawyer" and by the word "conceived," which left open all the questions of authorship. Your metaphor cleverly credited Moses with having borne the Torah through its long period of gestation without specifying the impulse, divine or human, of its conception.

Thinking about your comment now, I'm struck by another aspect altogether, not the *who* but the *what*. That mountaintop in the desert was certainly a strange place to have conceived the *Law*. Is that what you meant? Moses was the leader-guide of a rabble of former slaves crossing the desert on their way back from Egypt to their own land, Eretz Yisrael. At a certain point on this arduous journey, he abandoned his quarreling charges and retired for forty days to the top of this mountain. Why else remove yourself from the encumbrance of slaves if not to burst free into a purer air? Solitary at last, an audience of one, he would have registered every item of God's repertoire—each glint and echo, spoor of life, crumble of sandstone. Sun-scorched, he might have entertained visions of angels floating down from the heavenly cloud-beds to fan his brow.

From Moses on the mountain, one would have expected the Psalms. Or else he might have probed the mysteries of creation. With God as his only company he would have yearned to learn the secrets of His power. What drew up the sun from the well of night, who fathered the birds, and who had created the biped, at once so sturdy and so fragile?

Incredibly, Moses thought about none of this. He had withdrawn from those slaves at the foot of the mountain only so that he might return to them a better guide. Exhausted by the daily effort of keeping discipline in their ranks, he had realized that no single person could maintain order for anyone else. Unless these dissatisfied men and women began to assume greater responsibility for themselves and one another, they would either murder him in the desert and die there after him or else deteriorate as they watched him grow feeble. He had to absent himself temporarily from their squabbles and the smallness of their desires so as to conceive for them a dignified way of life.

Through all of this, it never occurred to him that his fate might be independent of theirs. Even the love he felt when he reached up to caress God's face in the heavens at night reminded him that he had yet to instill that love in His children down below. In stone, using the primitive implements at hand, he carved the laws on the tablets as he would have to inscribe them still more laboriously on their souls. One does not have to stand in awe of God: it is enough to stand in awe of Moses.

Anyway, our trip was not quite the same after that. Odd, how many conversations we entered into on the way down the mountain with people we hadn't previously spoken to at all. The two boys who had been trying to pick up the Harvard coed and had merged with her into a comradely threesome—it turned out that their fathers, who ran small textile factories in Lyons, came from Bialystok, as did my own father, also in textiles. We exchanged addresses, and a few weeks later my father actually received a letter from one of their parents, asking after lost relatives. And together, you and I discovered that the French Canadian from Trois Rivières was on the trip because of a book she had read on the Holocaust; the purpose of her coming to Israel was to understand the Jews of whom Jesus had been one, and whose fate theirs so resembled. She had applied for a job as a French teacher in a Montreal Jewish day school, and meant to use the pictures she was busily snapping as classroom material. I suggested that her students might benefit more from her intimate knowledge of Trois Rivières, but nothing could puncture her zeal.

Late that afternoon we made our most startling discovery. It was when we were sitting around in the long shadow of the trucks after the last stragglers had rejoined us. The guides had brought us a bag of dried fruit and nuts to pass around, and as you handed it to the person beside you he said "*todah*," thank you, in Hebrew. "*Ata medaber ivrit?*," do you speak Hebrew? you asked him unsteadily. "*Betakh*," he replied, of course, in a Hebrew accent more native than yours.

HE THEN began explaining—this man we had known only as the husband of Martine—that after arriving here as a child from Morocco with his family, he had served in the army, and that now he had brought his wife, her brother, and his sister-in-law on this outing to show them where he had been wounded in the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Six-Day War of 1967. We had, in fact, passed the battle site on our way to the mountain the previous day. He had been hurt quite badly, and his reconstructed knee still gave him a bit of trouble. (Was it possible, then, that Martine's heels were a fond wife's ingenious camouflage for his handicap?) Now he lived on Rue Mozart in Paris and, in partnership with his brother-in-law, ran a large store of children's clothing. In the summer he visited his family in Israel.

It had been, he continued, a mistake for Martine to attempt the climb in those unsuitable shoes, but the two women had been intending to stay at the campsite, and had something unforeseen not occurred the night before they would never have set out. What happened was that his wife had dreamed a strange dream. In her dream the stars had issued her an invitation to the top of the mountain where "*Moise*" had been given the Law, and in the morning she had refused to be left behind. His wife had a strong will. She had been raised in Morocco in a very religious household, and had memorized whole sections of the Torah, although she otherwise knew not a word of Hebrew. When they finally got to the top (after most of us had already begun our descent) his wife had declaimed the Ten Commandments.

I didn't hear most of this conversation as I was sitting quite a distance from you, and people kept passing back and forth between us while you spoke with him. I don't recall exactly what I felt when you told me about it that night. Surprise, certainly, and confusion. It occurred to me that the guides and some of us Hebrew speakers had said unpleasant things about the French couples, assuming they could not understand us, and without bothering to check whether they were out of earshot. Was Martine's husband impervious to insult, or had he pretended not to hear so as to protect his wife from the things being said about her? In a sense, their behavior was cast in an even more disturbing light by the revelation that they considered themselves proud and self-conscious Jews. Perhaps the Jewish tribe was not so far advanced through the moral discipline of Sinai as some of us had hoped? Or, perhaps, the discipline had been eroded through too many migrations and the shocks of modernity. Would their tenuous loyalties to Jewish law and family eventually turn them into worthier people, or did they merely exemplify the abject failure of Jewish civilization in the modern period?

As we scrambled to readjust our image of these fellow Jews, our behavior, too, came to seem more disturbing in retrospect. From the moment they joined our group, we had enjoyed the relative sense of virtue their misdeeds conferred on us. But even as their carelessness reinforced our self-righteousness, we allowed it to relax our own standards by a notch or two. Assuming no familial responsibility for them, we were prepared to condemn what they did rather than trying as our brothers' keepers to improve them. Without for a moment excusing them, we might have done better to confront the barbarism (even if the guides did not) rather than waiting, like spectators, for The Plot to resolve itself.

As I say, I don't recall exactly how I felt when you told me of your conversation that night, but right now at this moment, trying to untangle my feelings, I'm tired. If you've read this letter through, you may be feeling likewise. It's a tiredness I recognize as moral battle fatigue, and it must be connected with all the many claims of duty that by now harry the mind and soul. Just look at my perversity: a bolt of desire summons up the memory of you, and I sit down to write because I want to keep it momentarily alive. On paper at least, I want to recover what the loon has stirred up in me, but in the course of retrieving that stab of pleasure I spin out the very net of morality that will entangle and finally trap me. Sex requires the momentary suspension of moral disbelief. "And they gave themselves up utterly to love" must be attended by "And they saw that it was good." I am approaching the point in our narrative when we could no longer give ourselves up to love because we could no longer believe that it was good.

Are you smiling at my use of the plural pronoun? Don't worry. I am not suffering from loss of memory, or resorting to poetic license. It was you alone who decided that we would have to leave our love behind in the desert because it couldn't be adapted to the requirements of civilization. I fought you with every argument in my arsenal. You were the one who explained, and soothed, and cajoled, and reassured, and who finally convinced me not through any of your manifold powers of persuasion, but because there was no way I could rape you, that is, have you against your will. You forced me to accept a decision you had reached on your own. Yet, having accepted the decision that you forced on me, am I not entitled to join you in it?

The beach at Dahab where we spent the last night was much rockier than the sandy terrain of the desert. I could feel the stones in my back through both sleeping bags, and I thought you were referring to that bruising pressure from the ground when you asked me, so uncharacteristically, "Am I hurting you?" Tears of pleasure sprang to my eyes at that marriage of your power within me and your solicitude over me. I wanted you to stay and root yourself inside me like a tree, there in that inhospitable ground. But your question was deceptive, perhaps the only dishonesty of which I could ever accuse you. You were referring not to pain of the moment—by that time you were at least as stone-pocked as I—but to the terrible pain you were intending to inflict on me by ceasing, as soon as this final thrust was over, to "hurt" me ever again. You had decided that at the point of rejoining our spouses and resuming our regular lives we would have to become loving

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

friends instead of lovers. We would have to abide by the seventh commandment. I would never feel the sweet rise of you inside me again.

LET ME tell you what I've told you before: I could not have done what you did. The rest of that night, and during most of the next day when you gave what may well have been the most inspired legal address of your life, you persuaded me that you were trying to keep us together rather than drive us apart. Whatever callow motives I ascribed to you, I came to believe that you were right. We were not Tristan and Isolde, after all, but someone else's husband and someone else's wife, and we would not be able to sustain for very long a tawdry double life. The pictures you drew—of us scurrying around the city to rendezvous in a hotel room between four and five in the afternoon and then later bumping into one another on parents' night in the high school where we both intended to send our children—were realistic and ugly. If adultery in an age of effective birth control skirted the biological hazards of earlier times, it still undeniably retained enough poisoning powers to destroy most of family loyalty and family life. Impossible to have to lie perpetually in answer to such simple questions as, where are you going, what did you do this afternoon, without deforming the basic trust of our two marriages. There was too much love in our young families to warrant undoing them for the promise of love between you and me, and that being the case, there was too much to risk in the permanent masquerade that a love affair would require.

But I was startled when you even went so far as to invoke Judaism as a standard for civilizing ourselves. That was probably the first time I heard anyone, that is, anyone of our generation, apply Judaism as a guide to right action. Having been raised without regard for the specific directives of Jewish law, I had come to regard Jewishness as a kind of innate *idea* of right action, one that, having been born an ethical Jew, I could presumably adjust indefinitely to my own desires. Suddenly, you were telling me that being a Jew meant accepting the discipline of a Jew; that the mountain we'd climbed for adventure was a place of true consequence.

Naturally, I've often suspected you of feeling a lesser degree of desire for me than I felt for you, of wanting to dump me for convenience's sake, using morality for your excuse. But attributing motives to you is an exercise in solipsism, since I can never know your motives, even assuming that you could. Rejection is what most of us imbibe with our mother's milk, and we are as much attracted to it as we are to the nurturing love that is so often its accompaniment. The many times I have rehearsed your "rejection" of me I have nursed some ancient deprivation that has little to do with you, although it has obviously been important to me to believe that it issued from you. In the long run, what truly mattered was not your motive, but your words and the deeds they confirmed. All those hundreds of subsequent occasions when we spoke on the phone or talked over coffee or lunch I stood ready to scrap my "morals" with the same abandon that Martine lost the heel of her shoe. Maybe knowing that made it easier for you to police us. Certainly, the laws of Sinai alone could never have disciplined me. What contained me finally was that you said no.

Improbably, you taught me loyalty, which God makes the basis of His covenant. The modern temper distrusts loyalty on many counts—psychologically, for breeding passivity; intellectually, for stifling creativity; socially, for encouraging conformity; politically, for fostering tyranny. The experimental modern temper finds in loyalty the foil of elasticity, or a threat to self-reliance. Intellectuals, especially, boast of their iconoclasm, and Jewish intellectuals may work the hardest of all to establish their independence from a collective association that makes great demands from within and exposes them to embarrassing assaults from without.

But I think the arguments you once mounted against adultery are also the basis of every other kind of discipline. The opposite of loyalty is disloyalty, a rotten quality, however attractively it dissembles itself. Psychologically, it breeds selfishness; intellectually, it rewards lying; socially, it cultivates irresponsibility; politically, it invites tyranny. Although every rebel claims to be Prometheus defying the power of Zeus in order to bring warmth to humankind, or Spartacus defying the power of Rome in order to bring freedom to slaves, these claims depend—don't they?—on the nature of the law that is being defied. When you belong to a people that upholds freedom above all, opposition to its authority is really a blow against freedom. Civilization today depends on our willingness to remain a part of it.

WELL, my longing for you has this advantage at least: I shall never be effortlessly moral. I don't welcome exertion for its own sake, but we incipient sinners have a pungent appreciation of the fruits of the moral life. Maybe because I had to give up something precious for their sake, the simple lines of attachment that bind me to my husband and our children and friends and families become more precious with time. Not the least of my gains is that I've been able to love you unstintingly, just as you are, a family man. These may be staid pleasures compared to the thrills I sometimes crave, but they are generous pleasures, that can be enjoyed shamelessly before all the world. They will have to suffice.

WITH ALL MY HEART—
L.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hayek and the Conservatives

David Glasner

At the time of his death on March 23, 1992, less than two months before his ninety-third birthday, F.A. Hayek was widely if not universally acknowledged as this century's preeminent intellectual advocate of the free market and one of its leading opponents of socialism. His death, coming so soon after the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe and the abandonment of Marxism and socialism as intellectual ideals, occasioned understandable comment by his admirers about the vindication that Hayek, after years of vilification at the hands of critics, had received at the hands of history.

Though long in coming, however, Hayek's vindication did not occur all at once. For his work had exerted a crucial, though basically indirect, influence over the renascent conservative and libertarian movements that had grown up after World War II in the United States and Great Britain. Indeed, the revival of those movements culminated in the rise to power of two politicians, Ronald Reagan in America and Margaret Thatcher in England, who were proud to list Hayek among their intellectual mentors. And his vindication had also been presaged, though in an oddly ambiguous way, when Hayek was named co-winner, with the Swedish socialist economist Gunnar Myrdal, of the 1974 Nobel prize in economics.

Still, most of Hayek's career was spent in the relative obscurity befitting an expatriate Central European intellectual of reserve, urbanity, erudition—and unfashionable views. Hayek's economic theories had apparently been superseded, first by those of John Maynard Keynes and then by the increasingly mathematical economic analysis of the postwar period, and his political philosophy was considered either a relic of an obsolete Victorian liberalism or, less charitably, an apology for the worst excesses of capitalist exploitation. Before winning the Nobel prize, Hayek, who never served either officially or unofficially as an adviser to any political figure and never sought a mass audience, only twice transcended the obscurity in which he labored for so long: first in the early 1930's when, as a young man newly arrived in Great Britain, he was briefly considered the chief intellectual rival of Keynes, and a decade later in the mid-1940's when, much to Hayek's own surprise, his book, *The Road to Serfdom*, became a trans-Atlantic best-seller.

There, and in more than a dozen other books and several hundred articles, reviews, and pamphlets, Hayek set for himself the goal of understanding the conditions under which the liberty of individuals could be maximized. Beginning with his early work in economics, this lifelong program led Hayek into political and legal philosophy, the philosophy of science, legal and constitutional history, the history of ideas, psychology, theories of biological and cultural evolution, and a multitude of other seemingly unrelated fields.

Although *The Road to Serfdom* is likely to remain his best-known (and certainly his most accessible) book, more important are *The Constitution of Liberty*, published in 1960, and the trilogy, *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*, published serially between 1973 and 1979.* In the ninth decade of his life, Hayek embarked on a final work, *The Fatal Conceit*, which advancing old age kept him from completing to his satisfaction. The University of Chicago Press has now begun a projected 22-volume edition of Hayek's collected works, three volumes of which have already appeared: *The Fatal Conceit* (1988), edited by W.W. Bartley III, from Hayek's manuscript; *The Trend of Economic Thinking* (1991), edited by W.W. Bartley III and Stephen Kresge; and *The Fortunes of Liberalism* (1992), edited by Peter G. Klein.†

Ironically, Hayek's death occurred not only after his critique of socialism had just received decisive historical confirmation, but when the conservative movement in the United States, whose free-market and free-trade principles he, perhaps more than anyone else, had shaped, was undergoing a fundamental crisis. To understand the nature of the crisis, one must first understand how Hayek came to play such a crucial role in the development of conservatism.

Before World War II what passed for conservatism in the United States was an amalgam of views and prejudices which lacked sufficient coherence to be summarized by any clear set of principles. The chief characteristics of the Old Right were a fanatical opposition to Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal or indeed to any national measures aimed at improv-

David Glasner, *an economist in the Washington area, is the author of* Free Banking and Monetary Reform *(Cambridge University Press, 1989).*

* *Rules and Order* (1973); *The Mirage of Social Justice* (1975); *The Political Order of a Free Society* (1979).

† The entire project was originally under the general editorship of W.W. Bartley III, who was also writing Hayek's biography. Unfortunately, Bartley died suddenly in 1990; he has been succeeded by Stephen Kresge.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the lot of the least well-off groups or individuals in the country; opposition to international alliances, coupled with decidedly nativist tendencies and a bias in favor of protectionist trade policies; a primitive bias against banks, speculation, high finance, and Wall Street; and complacent toleration of, or occasionally even active support for, racial and religious discrimination against blacks, Jews, and other minorities.*

This set of prejudices had led American conservatism self-destructively to advocate many of the policies that helped bring about the Great Depression, including the infamous Smoot-Hawley Tariff of 1930 and the decision to raise interest rates in 1928-29 to choke off the "speculative" and "inflationary" stock-market boom. Once the Depression started, these same prejudices led conservatives to oppose any policies aimed at counteracting it or at hastening the recovery.

EVEN more disastrously, American conservatives, mistrusting the federal government and its tendency to become involved in European conflicts, and viscerally hating Roosevelt, bitterly opposed any U.S. efforts to resist or contain the spread of European fascism. These attitudes gave birth to the America First movement of the 1930's, whose often implicit and occasionally explicit anti-Semitic overtones can only be understood in the light of the broader set of fears, hatreds, and neuroses that animated the movement.

The onset of World War II, the attack on Pearl Harbor, and the subsequent horrific revelations about the Holocaust perpetrated by the Nazis (with whom the America Firsters had uniformly urged coexistence and for whom some of them had expressed sympathy) left American conservatism discredited both morally and intellectually, just as the Depression and a reflexive opposition to the New Deal had discredited conservatism programmatically.

Thus, when *The Road to Serfdom* was published in 1945, it filled a gaping moral and intellectual vacuum. For here was a book, written by an Austrian expatriate of impeccable anti-Nazi credentials, fundamentally opposed to the socialist ideas now guiding progressive thought everywhere. Moreover, in a profound and eloquent argument, *The Road to Serfdom* contended that the path the fascists had followed to absolute power had been prepared for them by the very instruments of central planning and the ideology of an all-powerful state which socialists had created before them. The Nazis, after all, had been *National Socialists*, and Mussolini had been a leader of the Italian Socialist party before starting the Fascist party. The common characteristic of all such movements was to subordinate the individual to the supposed interests of some abstract collective entity—class, nation, race, or simply society.

In a relatively brief span of time, Hayek's version of free-market, free-trade liberalism (in the traditional European sense of the word), and political internationalism, which had never before taken root among either American conservatives or liberals, became the bedrock on which the generation of American conservatives who came of age after 1945 built a political movement. Liberated from nativist, protectionist, and isolationist tendencies, this generation could turn its energies to the struggle against Communism and other forms of collectivism, and to the promotion of a free-market economy.

Naturally the transformation of American conservatism was never complete, and vestiges of Old Right prejudices and bigotry continued to coexist uneasily with the more cosmopolitan and humane impulses borrowed from Hayek and other European liberals (and, for that matter, from such European conservatives as Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, and Michael Oakeshott). The lingering Old Right influence is today most noticeable in the conspiratorial cast of mind, the obsession with betrayal and disloyalty, the search for alien influences, the siege mentality, the anti-intellectualism, the chauvinism, and the free-floating anger that unfortunately still pervade parts of the conservative movement. It is just these qualities that Patrick J. Buchanan would restore if he should ever succeed in "taking back" the movement from those who, in his words, have hijacked it.†

BUT even as Hayek helped indirectly to transform and rehabilitate American conservatism, in another irony of fate he became a major intellectual influence over a smaller group of self-styled libertarians. In their extreme antipathy toward the modern centralized state, these libertarians adopted a stance of thoroughgoing opposition to the anti-Communist policies of the cold war. Despite Hayek's own personal support for America's postwar foreign policy—he believed, for example, that America's intervention in Vietnam was necessary to prevent a Communist takeover of all Southeast Asia—modern libertarians were drawn to his critique of socialism, his searching criticism of the principles underlying much government intervention in the market, and his early opposition to Keynes. Yet in embracing Hayek the libertarians created an oversimplified impression, if not a caricature, of his views on the role of government in a free society.

The gap between Hayek and the libertarians is evident from his attitude toward one of their favorite nemeses, Walter Lippmann. In a note at the end of *The Road to Serfdom*, Hayek included Lipp-

* There were exceptions on this last point. The leading conservative of the period, Robert Taft, was a man of integrity who was free of any religious or racial bias. But even he was an isolationist and a protectionist to the core.

† Far from being embarrassed by the prejudices of the Old Right, Buchanan is fully at home with them, as he shows by invoking such terms as "America First." Similarly, his rhetoric about Jews, Zionists, and Israel not only reflects an iconoclastic and bellicose personality, but echoes and updates the language of earlier America Firsters in their opposition to U.S. involvement in the anti-Nazi coalition of the 1930's. Even his flirtation with Holocaust revisionism is foreshadowed in the efforts of America Firsters and Old Rightists to argue that Hitler had been driven to start World War II by the implacable hostility of the likes of Churchill, and that the magnitude of Nazi war crimes was exaggerated.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mann's 1937 book, *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Good Society*, in his list of the handful of "writers . . . whose studies have led them independently to similar conclusions." Elsewhere Hayek spoke of how Lippmann had "delighted and encouraged all liberals by the publication of his brilliant restatement of the fundamental ideals of classic liberalism in his book, *The Good Society*."

The principles of the good society that Lippmann endorsed included, on the one hand, private property and free markets as the bulwark of individual liberty and democracy. But, on the other hand, they also included government action to maintain competition, to prevent or to moderate the cyclical fluctuations to which industrial market economies were susceptible, and to provide a minimum level of support to mitigate extreme poverty and to ensure against certain common risks that might not be insurable through conventional private markets. While Hayek did not endorse Lippmann's essentially Keynesian approach to counter-cyclical policy, his dissent was more technical than fundamental. Concerning the provision of a basic minimum level of support, Hayek had no quarrel with Lippmann as long as such measures did not obstruct the free determination of prices by market forces.

This point is worth stressing in view of the common distortion of *The Road to Serfdom* both by Hayek's many detractors on the Left and by his admirers on the Right. Thus, Hayek is supposed to have asserted that any form of government intervention in the market economy, however small, must inexorably lead to a totalitarian political system. In fact, he wrote in *The Road to Serfdom*:

> There is no reason why in a society which has reached the general level of wealth which ours has attained, [this] kind of security should not be guaranteed to all without endangering general freedom. . . . There can be no doubt that some minimum of food, shelter, and clothing, sufficient to preserve health and the capacity to work, can be assured to everybody.

The key distinction for Hayek was not big government versus small government, but between a government of laws in which all coercive action is constrained by general and impartial rules, and a government of men in which coercion may be arbitrarily exercised to achieve whatever ends the government, or even the majority on whose behalf it acts, wishes to accomplish. Though Hayek contemplated with little enthusiasm the absorption by the state of a third or more of national income, the amount and character of government spending were to him very much a secondary issue that directly involved no fundamental principle.

To GAIN a clear understanding of what Hayek did regard as fundamental principles, one must consult his two later works, *The Constitution of Liberty* and *Law, Legislation, and Liberty*. In both books, but especially the latter one, Hayek grounded his view of classical liberalism—which amounts to the injunction that the state exercise coercion predictably and impartially, and only in accordance with general rules—in a neo-Darwinian theory of social evolution and spontaneous social order.

Hayek's point is that there is no deductive proof from self-evident axioms that will establish the case for liberty. Rather, he argues, liberty is a condition and a value that has evolved with society. If we value liberty, it is because Western civilization has evolved in such a way that liberty has become part of its tradition. That tradition, the provisional outcome of a contingent historical and evolutionary process, cannot be explained in purely rational terms.

This approach to social theory, the product of a thoroughgoing philosophical skepticism, is decidedly incompatible with the religious beliefs to which a large segment of the conservative movement subscribes, and equally unattractive to those, conservative or libertarian, who ground their political beliefs in natural law or in any other set of self-evident truths. This no doubt explains the regrettably limited influence that Hayek's later work has exerted on American conservatives—particularly unfortunate because his rich contributions to legal and constitutional theory have much to offer both conservatives and liberals struggling to formulate a coherent philosophy of adjudication.

That apart, however, it remains undeniable that the primary goals of American conservatism in the postwar era evolved steadily from an Old Right toward a Hayekian agenda: from isolationism to containing the military expansion of Communism and other aggressive totalitarian movements; from protectionism to reducing the extent of government interference with and disruption of the free-market economy both domestically and internationally; from wholesale opposition to the New Deal to reforming and rationalizing its social-insurance measures along more market-oriented lines, and focusing government efforts on helping the least well-off rather than redistributing income generally.

Given the conflicting pressures under which policies are made, this agenda has been far from perfectly implemented even under conservative administrations. Yet it was only by embracing such an agenda that conservatism attracted not just new intellectual supporters—the neoconservatives—but, at least in presidential elections, a majority of votes. A retreat to the Old Right stance advocated by Patrick J. Buchanan and his supporters would mean not just throwing overboard the neoconservative "parvenus," it would mean eradicating root and branch the fundamental consensus that enabled American conservatism to grow and to thrive in the postwar era.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books in Review

Old Wine

HEAD TO HEAD. By LESTER THUROW. *Morrow. 336 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by IRWIN M. STELZER

IF THIS book were not so much like the current Democratic platform, it would be merely an amusing read: a noted liberal academic (dean of MIT's Sloan School), his theories done in by inconvenient facts, struggling to explain why he is nevertheless right.

Was America's victory in the cold war due to Ronald Reagan's willingness to outspend and outlast the Soviets? Certainly not, says Thurow. Was it then due to the inherent contradictions of Communist economics? Again, an emphatic no. After all, Thurow assures us, the Soviet economy was growing rapidly in the 80's: "There were no signs of collapse." And the "evil empire" that Reagan also described as a dangerous "bear in the woods" was, it seems, a figment of the President's imagination. Unrelated to any U.S. action, "suddenly, the bear disappeared," for reasons as "mysterious," says Thurow, as Genghis Khan's sudden withdrawal from Europe.

I mention Thurow's analysis of the reason for the West's triumph in the cold war not because it is central to his thesis, but because it is central to his analytic technique: wish away unpleasant facts; assume that a U.S. government that he contends was unable to affect Soviet behavior is competent in all other things—planning, education, heath care; and somehow, in the face of recent history, conclude that individuals must subordinate themselves to the collective if they are to maximize their well-being.

As for Thurow's thesis, it is relatively straightforward. The end of the cold war left the United States as the world's only military superpower. But "Without a pause, the contest has shifted from being a military contest to being an economic contest" among the United States, Japan, and Europe, with the last "centered on Germany."

This new economic contest, continues Thurow, will be unlike the rivalries of the past. Until recently, trade between countries was a win-win situation: America's agricultural exports did not threaten good jobs in West Germany and Japan, and imports from those countries did not consist of goods we particularly wanted to make. But this "niche competition" will give way to "head-to-head competition" in the next century. Why? Because the U.S., Japan, and Germany have identical lists of the industries "they think are necessary to give their citizens a world-class standard of living": microelectronics, biotechnology, materials sciences, telecommunications, civilian aviation, robotics plus machine tools, and computers plus software.

In this new world, the environmental and technological revolutions have reduced the importance of natural resources as a source of comparative advantage; "brainpower," a man-made resource, is now all-important. So is access to world capital and labor markets, now made easy for America's rivals by the "telecommunications-computer-transportation logistics revolution."

One would think that such a mobile, high-tech world is precisely one in which America is likely to thrive. Not according to Thurow. First, our past success encourages us to cling to ancient virtues that "are no longer virtues," and makes it hard for us to change. Yet even as he writes this, America is changing so rapidly as to make one's head spin. The military is being cut sharply; defense procurement is tapering off; bank, corporate, and household balance sheets are being reconstituted to reduce the role of debt; inflation is beaten and interest rates are so low that homes are more affordable now than they have been in decades; black-white income differentials are down; women have more occupational and life-style choices than could be imagined even a decade ago.

But its past successes are not the only reason Thurow thinks that America is in trouble. It suffers, too, from capitalism's failures: slow economic growth in the U.S. and negative economic growth in parts of the third world; rising inequality and homelessness. How capitalism can be blamed for the failure of the centrally directed third-world economies, or not be given credit for the success of Asia's tigers, is nowhere explained. And why homelessness is listed as a failure of capitalism when socialist economies cannot even house returning soldiers remains a mystery.

So, too, does the logic of Thurow's other indictment of capitalism: "Free markets also tend to produce levels of income inequality that are politically incompatible with democratic government." His proof? The presence of large income-transfer programs in most capitalist countries. No consideration here of the possibility that capitalist and free-market societies are so productive that their lucky inhabitants can afford large transfers of income to people who would be considered too well-off to need them in other societies. Or that the democratic governments that freely decide on these income transfers could not exist in the absence of free-market capitalism.

IRWIN M. STELZER *is director of Regulatory Policy Studies at the American Enterprise Institute and U.S. economic and political columnist for the London* Sunday Times *and the Boston* Herald.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hayek, one supposes, is not required reading at Thurow's MIT Nor is Adam Smith or Schumpeter, for to Thurow, something he calls "unfettered capitalism" is doomed by its "tendency to drift into either financial instability or monopoly." It should not be surprising, therefore, that he spends a good deal of time figuring out just how to fetter it.

To THUROW's credit, his prescriptions do not rest on the silly but common assumption that economic rivalry is somehow equivalent to military rivalry. He recognizes that being invaded by superior foreign products is not quite the same as being invaded by superior foreign troops. A Mercedes, in short, is not a storm trooper.

Still, he claims, our rivals, Germany and Japan, are winning this new, non-military battle because they eschew "the individualistic Anglo-Saxon British-American form of capitalism" in favor of "communitarian . . . capitalism," and rely on "business groups" and "teamwork" rather than on "the brilliant entrepreneur, Nobel Prize winners . . . , individual responsibility . . . , and the Lone Ranger."

Note, first, the strange linking of American to British capitalism. Strange, because America prospered mightily after World War II by practicing the individualistic capitalism that Thurow says will sink us in the next century, but not so Britain. Its socialist government took over the steel, auto, airline, coal, utility, and housing industries, and then, under Harold Wilson, set about "picking winners" to warm Britain in the "white heat of technology." The result? Progressive impoverishment, reversed only when Margaret Thatcher—derided by Thurow "because she insisted on playing the old 20th-century game"—determinedly shrank the public sector and reasserted the role of the individual as the engine of economic progress.

Note, too, that Thurow overestimates our adversaries. Indeed, he predicts that unless America adopts an "industrial policy"—give him credit for explicitly embracing a term his political counterparts fear to utter—it will lose the economic competition of the next century to its powerful, wiser rivals and become a "low-wage, low-tech" exporter, with diminished prospects of "a world-class standard of living, and some of the chances for the good things of life that Americans have come to expect." With the integration of Europe on January 1, 1993,

> the United States for the first time in more than one hundred years . . . will become the world's second-largest integrated market. The major economic leagues will be in Europe.

And the Japanese are "ALWAYS WINNERS!"

Pithy. But wrong. As the Europeans approach January 1, 1993, European federalism looks more likely to produce a stultifying bureaucracy than economic growth. A burgeoning Brussels bureaucracy is generating rules that govern all aspects of commercial life; its so-called "social charter" so lumbers manufacturers with costs that they need protection from American and Japanese goods; and coordinated economic policy has so far created high interest rates and unemployment, rather than economic growth and jobs.

As for Japan, the producer-driven, export-led economic policies that Thurow so admires have been bought at a terrible cost in living standards. The Japanese worker, mistakenly thought by Thurow to be immune from the consequences of recession, commutes to work longer, lives in cramped quarters so expensive that mortgages are amortized over two generations, pays $30 per pound for high-quality beef that Americans buy for half that, has fewer open spaces available to him, and would have to fork over up to $1 million for access to a golf course, if he could afford it. Is this the model to which Thurow would have Americans aspire?

LIKE other proponents of industrial policy and managed trade, Thurow cites a string of Japanese (and European) successes, and American failures. Oddly, one of these is high-definition television (HDTV) which, we are assured, is not apt to be an American success story. Wrong again. Both the Japanese and the Europeans, their bureaucrats operating in response to pressures from domestic producers, bet massively on what is now conceded to be an already obsolete analog technology. Americans, meanwhile, were hampered, according to Thurow, by "the ideological crusaders in the White House, . . . [who] beat the advocates of government research subsidies in the Commerce and Defense departments." But these deprived American capitalists opted for the digital technology which is so superior to the analog that European and Japanese manufacturers are clamoring for protection against it. And the Brussels bureaucrats who picked the loser are attempting to force European broadcasters to go analog so that French and Dutch manufacturers can sell television sets that no one wants.

None of this is to say that Thurow is wrong in arguing that a system of completely free trade is unattainable in a world of nation-states with objectives other than the maximization of consumer welfare. In a world in which political pressure groups exist—Japanese farmers, American automobile manufacturers, European electronics firms—some protectionism will also exist. But better a broad fidelity to free trade, buttressed by threats of retaliation in specific instances, than a broad program of managed trade—managed by politicians more susceptible to pressures from declining industries than to those from small, nascent ones.

WHEN it comes to government intervention, Thurow is a bit more sensible than some of his liberal colleagues. He argues that government aid should be focused on increasing the skills of American workers and on improving infrastructure, "and not upon financial aid for American corporations." That's on page 200. Unfortunately, by page 295 Thurow is back in the corporate-aid business. Corporate consortia, drawn from

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more than one region so that "the government is not subsidizing a special favorite," will propose the technologies that "should be pushed." These consortia will have to put up at least half of the money. "The bureaucracy that makes the funding decisions can be very small. . . ."

Perhaps the best comment on a formulation such as this was made by the economist Herbert Stein. He sardonically envisions an Industrial Policy Administration (IPA) run by a retired Air Force general "who has racked up $50 billion of cost overruns." The general's deputy is a defeated Congressman, and each division of the IPA is headed by an associate professor from a leading business school. These characters meet weekly to select projects that IBM, AT&T, Merck, and individual entrepreneurs find insufficiently attractive to fund in full. Since success is measured, not by profitability, but by "contribution to national productivity through a very complicated chain of developments," no one will ever be able to prove that any of these projects were dry holes, most of which will be in Senator Robert Byrd's West Virginia.

FINALLY, there are Thurow's observations on education policy and on infrastructure investment. In both fields, Thurow well describes the nature of the problem. But when he moves from description to prescription, he is unable to free himself from his prejudice that the government, or some quasi-governmental collective, is the only instrument for the solution.

In the case of education, Thurow's solution is a "grand bargain"—higher wages for teachers, financed by taxpayers, in return for lower administrative costs, a longer school day, and a school year at least 220 (as opposed to the current 180) days long. This would be combined with the establishment of "an objective quality standard" by high-wage firms for the non-college bound, supplemented by laws requiring business firms to invest 1 percent of their sales on training (an idea since adopted by Governor Bill Clinton).

Under no circumstances, however, should we allow "completely free parental choice, unrestricted school vouchers," lest schools spring up devoted to black nationalism or white supremacy. Parents, it seems, cannot be trusted to divine their children's educational interests, or allowed the wherewithal (vouchers) to pursue those interests. So raise their taxes, funnel the money to unionized teachers, and trust local corporations to identify the skills that students will need in the future. The probability is not considered that this will produce West Virginians trained to mine uneconomic coal, New Englanders capable of producing Wang computers that are obsolete, and Texans skilled at finding uneconomically costly oil.

Six Days in June
How Israel Won the 1967 Arab-Israeli War
by Eric Hammel
Scribner's, 480 pages, **$30.00**

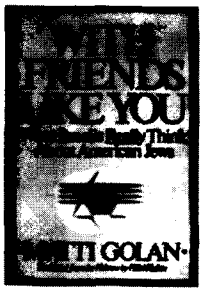
This eminent military historian chronicles the most dramatic and brilliantly executed military campaign of the 20th century. A meticulous history detailing how Israel built a world-class military institution. **# 76904**

AMERICA'S JEWISH BOOKSTORE℠
1-800-JUDAISM

New Books for Fall 1992
Special Offer: Free Shipping and Handling

To Order:
Call: 1-800-Judaism (583-2476)
Fax: 1-412-421-6103
Write: 2028 Murray Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15217

Payment by check, MasterCard, Visa or Amex



With Friends Like You
What Israelis Really Think About American Jews
by Matti Golan
Free Press, 150 pages, **$19.95**

A leading Israeli journalist expresses Israeli resentment towards American Jews who want Israel to behave in ways that don't embarrass them and those who think donations buy them the right to influence Israeli policies. **# 81401**

Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials
A Personal Memoir
by Telford Taylor
Knopf, 736 pages, **$35.00**

Long-awaited memoir by the trials' chief counsel. Behind-the-scene portraits of Goering, Hess, Ribbentrop, Speer, and their co-conspirators are riveting in their candor. Among other revelations, the author argues that Nazi publisher Julius Streicher was unjustifiably hanged and provides new details on Goering's suicide. With 42 photographs. **# 58503**

If I Am Not For Myself...
The Liberal Betrayal of the Jews
by Ruth Wisse
Free Press, 270 pages, **$22.95**

Whenever Jews have been attacked — from the Dreyfus trial to the Arab wars — liberals have been slow to defend Jewish rights. Many conclude that Jews themselves are responsible for the continuing wars against them and refuse to confront the real cause: anti—Semitism. Wisse's book is a profound attempt to maintain her own liberalism in the face of these realities. **# 68016**

Call, fax or write for our free 24-page Catalog of New Books for Fall 1992

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Similarly with infrastructure. While recognizing that such projects as electronic highways "will require both public and private investment," Thurow fails to take the obvious next step and explore the possibility that (as many economists have been coming to believe) private investment might be able to carry the greater part of the burden. Instead, he pines for "exciting new infrastructure projects" like bullet trains and computer networks—without a word about who will pay for projects that users will not fund, or how to measure the benefits to non-users.

AT BOTTOM, Thurow fails not only because many of his solutions are old, statist wine in new bottles. He fails for two other reasons as well. First, in seeking solutions that always substitute collectivist action by big government and big business for individual initiative, he ignores recent history. Even the entrepreneurs who powered the Reagan boom have no place in Thurow's new order.

Indeed, Thurow would do everything possible to discourage these entrepreneurs:

> [N]ew start-ups do not substitute for giant corporations that retain their vitality. . . . It is . . . possible to have too much entrepreneurship. New firms cannot grow big because they are always hemorrhaging their more talented people. . . . [T]hey have to be boxed in. . . .

How? By allowing the financial institutions that now attract such talents to buy financial interests in industrial firms, and to manage them. In short, put the brilliant bankers who lent billions to Latin American countries, to explorers for $100-oil, and to builders of empty office towers and shopping malls, in charge of America's industries.

Second, Thurow fails because he starts from the premise that "the American system as it is now formulated is not working." But as Robert L. Bartley recently demonstrated in these pages ("Is America on the Way Down?," March 1992), the system is working quite well. Or was, until the Bush/Brady/Darman retreat from Reaganomics began. But that is another story, also already well argued in these pages.

PC Science

RATIONAL READINGS ON ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS. Edited by JAY LEHR. *Van Nostrand Reinhold. 841 pp. $49.95.*

Reviewed by JEFFREY SALMON

TWO decades ago the Club of Rome published *The Limits to Growth,* a study which used computer models to predict that economic expansion would soon exhaust global resources and trigger a catastrophic collapse in the world's economy. A reviewer in the New York *Times* rightly described the book as "empty," "misleading," and a "rediscovery of the oldest maxim of computer science: Garbage In, Garbage Out." But New York *Times* columnist Anthony Lewis said that *Limits* was "likely to be one of the most important documents of our age."

Sadly, time has shown Lewis to be correct. The sentiments of *Limits,* garbage though they may be, are now the mainsprings of the environmental movement. The rhetoric of the recent Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro—act now, before it is too late to save our planet—was the rhetoric of the Club of Rome. In fact, an update of *Limits,* repeating the errors of 1972, was released just in time for Rio, proving that environmentalists recycle everything, including arguments.

Those arguments, however, seldom come to us any longer as direct assaults on economic growth or even capitalism. Instead, they are offered as scientific fact, documented and peer-reviewed. Choose your favorite environmental scare, from alar to vanishing wetlands, and you will find a case built on technical evidence. It is, therefore, on the grounds of scientific findings that debates about imminent ecological disaster must begin.

Rational Readings on Environmental Concerns is an important text for those wishing to understand the science—or the lack of science—that animates the most common environmental fears of our day. Fifty-one leading scientists have taken a skeptical look at the idea that we are running out of landfills (we are not); that Love Canal and Times Beach were environmental disasters (they were not); that industrialization has created an ozone hole (it has not); and a host of other popular notions. The essays are generally well-written and, with only a few exceptions, accessible to the layman. There are also useful discussions of the philosophical roots of the ecology movement and the economics of modern environmentalism.

THE argument of *Rational Readings* can be stated quite simply: much of what we have come to accept as scientific fact about the environment turns out to be without foundation. In some cases the distortion and misuse of scientific data border on fraud; in others, scientific evidence is used selectively and is exaggerated to turn a legitimate environmental concern into a species-threatening calamity. Taken together, the cases discussed in this book amount to an indictment of the environmental movement and call into question the integrity of science in America.

The fraudulent use of scientific data in the ecology debate has a long history. In 1962, Rachel Carson in *Silent Spring* literally wrote the book on how man-made substances used for industrial or agricultural production could be branded extreme environmental hazards on the basis of weak scientific findings. Among other things, she claimed the insecticide DDT endangered bird populations through eggshell thinning, was destroying algae in the ocean, jeopardizing the world's oxygen supply, and killing fish. And she linked DDT to cancer, polio, and a variety of other illnesses.

Ever since *Silent Spring,* it has

JEFFREY SALMON, *a new contributor, is executive director of the George C. Marshall Institute in Washington, D.C.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been common wisdom that DDT—now off the market—presents grave health risks. But as *Rational Readings* shows, *Silent Spring* was a fraud. Take the alleged harm to birds. In order to prove DDT the culprit, the researchers cited by Carson purposely fed birds a calcium-deficient diet that guaranteed thin eggshells; repeated subsequent experiments on caged birds have demonstrated that even extremely high doses of DDT do not by themselves cause eggshell-thinning. Indeed, DDT is one of the most beneficial chemicals ever invented, and can be used without harm to humans or animals.

But surely, it may be countered, some banned substances, such as asbestos, really are dangerous. Here again, *Rational Readings* sets the record straight. Only one of the several varieties of this material, so-called blue asbestos, poses a risk of lung cancer, while the most commonly used form of asbestos is relatively benign. Yet the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has stated that all types of asbestos are an equal threat, and any school administrator finding it in one of his buildings is virtually compelled to have it removed, no matter how many more fibers are thereby released into the air than if it were just left in place—much the safest thing to do.

ANOTHER major issue: global warming. Most scientists agree that the earth's temperature has increased over the last century. The question is why. Advocates of the greenhouse theory say the reason is carbon dioxide (CO_2) produced from the burning of fossil fuels, and predict that a doubling of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere over the next 100 years will cause global temperatures to rise as much as 8°F. But as Fred Singer and Hugh Ellsaesser make clear here, the theory is based on very questionable computer models. Nor, probably, is CO_2 responsible for the warming we have experienced in the last century. Finally, many scientists believe that even if the predicted increase of CO_2 takes place, its consequences will be benign because carbon dioxide has a fertilizing effect on plants.

That there are deep differences of opinion on the greenhouse effect within the scientific community will come as a surprise to anyone listening to the chorus of denunciation against the Bush White House for not accepting it as dogma. But such differences are, in fact, the case. And similar uncertainty characterizes scientific opinion on the ozone hole, this year's most highly publicized eco-disaster.

The conventional wisdom is that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) have caused a depletion in the ozone layer over the Antarctic, threatening to bathe us all in cancer-causing ultraviolet (UV) rays. Consequently, we have banned CFCs and will pay the price in less efficient, more costly, and perhaps far more dangerous substitutes to keep our air-conditioners and refrigerators working.

Yet as with global warming, our public policy in this instance has been built on shaky science. For as the scientists in *Rational Readings* document, at the same time that the ozone hole has supposedly been allowing more and more rays to hit us, UV rates have been *declining*. As for the increase in melanomas so frequently associated with the ozone hole, this has been going on for years and is unconnected to ozone *or* to CFCs. It may well be, moreover, that whatever decline in ozone has occurred has been the result of the natural solar cycle, leaving no room at all for CFC influence. Finally, even a 5-percent decrease in atmospheric ozone, a very pessimistic figure, would produce an increase in UV exposure no greater than would be involved in moving south from Palm Beach to Miami.

Then there is acid rain. This, we are told, has ruined lakes and forests in the Northeast and caused great damage to wildlife. President Bush's Clean Air act, which aims primarily to deal with the supposed acid-rain problem, will cost $4 to $7 billion per year to enforce and

▲WHY do East Asian immigrants perform so well in America?

▲WHY are two-thirds of America's black population middle class — while one-third remains in the ghetto?

▲WHY do Hispanic Americans acculturate more slowly than most other immigrant groups?

BEYOND POLITICALLY CORRECT

"In these politically correct times... Harrison makes a compelling case that certain cultural values contribute to the success of some nations over others."
— Linda Chavez, author of *Out of the Barrio*

"An important contribution to our understanding of how wealth and well-being are created in the modern world." — Francis Fukuyama, author of *The End of History and the Last Man*

"It is crucially important that this book be read, both at home and abroad."
— Richard Lamm, former governor of Colorado

WHO PROSPERS
How Cultural Values Shape Economic and Political Success
Lawrence E. Harrison

$22 at bookstores or call toll-free 800-331-3761

BasicBooks
A Division of HarperCollins*Publishers*

Also available from HarperCollins*CanadaLtd*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will entail some $40 billion in lost GNP. Yet the most extensive study of this issue by the EPA's own National Acid Precipitation Assessment Project (NAPAP) concluded that most of the lakes supposedly killed by acid rain have been acidic for centuries; that acid rain has not caused extensive tree damage; that Florida, which has almost no acid rain, has lots of acidic lakes; that fish have seldom if ever lived in the lakes that are now termed dead; and that we can de-acidify all the acid lakes by dusting them with lime for under a half-million dollars.

IT IS bad enough when environmental groups use and abuse scientific data for their own ends. Still worse is when scientists themselves participate willingly in distortions of fact in order to advance some specific policy goal. Thus, Stephen Schneider, one of the most active proponents of the greenhouse theory, believes that to help the environmental movement get public attention and "loads of media coverage," scientists "have to offer up scary scenarios and make little mention of the doubts we may have." "Each [scientist] has to decide what the right balance is between being effective and being honest," Schneider writes, tacitly abandoning the fundamental requirement of modern science—namely, objectivity. Schneider observes, ruefully, that a scientist who associates himself with the environmental movement is in a "double ethical bind," but in fact there is not even a single bind here: Schneider and many of his colleagues are simply hired guns.

As Richard Sanford points out in this book, the ban on DDT has allowed a resurgence of malaria, costing millions of lives a year; needless asbestos removal will certainly endanger people and cause deaths; billions of tax dollars are being diverted from genuine environmental problems to handle trendy concerns such as global warming and the ozone hole—all because partial, distorted, or fraudulent science seeks to convince us we are threatened.

Unless there is a vigorous and vocal movement within the scientific community to preserve the integrity of the discipline, the aura of objectivity surrounding science is bound to evaporate, and so too will the credibility of scientists. All the greater reason, then, to welcome a book like *Rational Readings*, and to lament the fact that it is virtually one of a kind.

"The Sacred Executioner"

JUDAS ISCARIOT AND THE MYTH OF JEWISH EVIL. By HYAM MACCOBY. *Free Press. 213 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by JON D. LEVENSON

SELDOM have scriptural text and social history come together so explosively as in the case of the New Testament story of Judas Iscariot. "[A]s Judas was called a devil and the devil's workman," wrote Pope Gelasius I at the end of the 5th century, "he gives his name to the whole race." The race the pope had in mind was, of course, the Jews.

As Hyam Maccoby demonstrates with cogency and lucidity, the growth of the legend of Judas—and perhaps its inception as well—is inextricably linked to the anti-Semitic stereotypes that have appeared wherever Christianity has gone. The notion of the Jews as greedy and miserly, for example, is associated with the "deeply implanted, canonical myth" that Judas's motive for betraying Jesus to the authorities was the 30 pieces of silver that they paid him. The moneybag with which Judas was portrayed in medieval art and the Passion Plays thus recalls not only the New Testament narrative but also the contemporary Jewish moneylender, who was often depicted toting the same unsavory item.

Maccoby is at pains to point out, however, that the concept of the Jews as the Judas-people easily survived the widespread loss of Christian faith after the Enlightenment: "[A]lmost every national group of Christian background whose aspirations have been disappointed is ready to blame it on those 'traitors' the Jews." A parade example is the infamous case of Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army at the turn of the century who was accused of handing over secrets to the Germans. In anti-Dreyfusard polemics, the equation of Dreyfus with Judas was common and unsubtle.

Nor has it only been the nationalistic Right that has perpetuated the old Christian scapegoating. It was the socialist pioneer Charles Fourier who wrote that "[t]he Jew is, so to speak, a traitor by definition." As Maccoby observes, the Left's continuation of the old Christian demonizing of Jews is found not only in Marx but also in the newer anti-Semitism of today that equates Zionism with racism and Western imperialism, and the Jews with capitalism and the exploitation of the third world. Maccoby's learned survey of the strangely persistent association of Jews with Judas in modern times leads him to sound a cautionary note about the hopes usually associated with secularization:

> It is just at this point in the development of culture, when a myth is renounced on the conscious level, that it can take hold even more strongly on the unconscious level.

BUT tracing the latter-day progress of the Judas story is only one part of Maccoby's project in this book. He is also concerned with recovering the "true" Judas from the burgeoning mass of Christian legend and polemic. Here his speculations, though always suggestive, sometimes come to resemble a veritable house of cards.

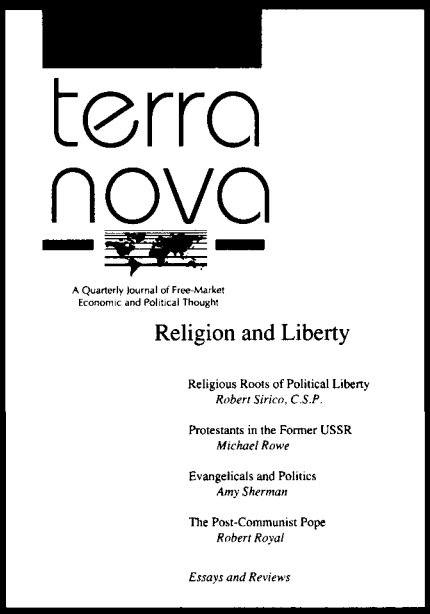
In Maccoby's historical reconstruction, the New Testament story of Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus is itself every bit as much a "myth" as are the traditional anti-Semitic canards about Jewish evil. The letters of the apostle Paul, which predate the Gospels, show no awareness whatsoever of the legend of

---

JON D. LEVENSON *is Albert A. List Professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard University. His new book,* The Hebrew Bible, the Old Testament, and Historical Criticism, *will appear in April 1993 (Westminster/John Knox).*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Try terra nova free!



". . . an indispensable guide book to the global free market revolution."

—Vladimir Bukovsky

"Now that free markets are the universal 'toast-of-the-town,' why not take a drink from the source? Keen analysis, vigorous interpretation and lucid thinking: this is what terra nova delivers."

—Jean-François Revel

"Well conceived, well executed . . . a necessary addition to every library of international affairs today."

—The Baroness Caroline Cox

"terra nova breaks through the old thinking of the Cold War era and provides a genuinely new perspective."

—Professor Steve H. Hanke
Johns Hopkins University

"Unique . . . timely . . . penetrating."

—Professor Antonio Martino
Mont Pelerin Society

With the end of the Cold War, people the world over are turning toward free market principles to end the misery of socialist central planning and political oppression. New information and communications technologies are penetrating the walls built by repressive regimes; and people are demanding to join the free world.

This process of change has made possible a new forum for people around the world to exchange ideas and develop new solutions to their shared problems. That forum is **terra nova** (literally, *new world*). With contributing editors on three continents, **terra nova** offers a uniquely global perspective on international affairs.

Presenting a broad horizon of views from analysts, politicians, economists, academics and journalists from around the world, **terra nova** is truly THE journal of the new world order.

YES, Please send me a trial issue of **terra nova**, the quarterly journal of free market economic and political thought. If not completely satisfied, I will write "cancel" on the invoice and owe nothing. Or, I'll stay on the cutting edge of international affairs and pay $19.95 for four issues. (Outside U.S., add $10.00 for air mail delivery.)

Name_____

Address_____

City, State, Zip_____

terra nova
Department C1
200 G Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002
U.S.A.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Judas. Indeed, Paul reports that the resurrected Jesus appeared to the *twelve* apostles, as if one of them had not already been discredited. From this, Maccoby concludes—plausibly though conjecturally—that the legend of the betrayal is of post-Pauline origin. Next he traces the evolution of the Judas story through the canonical Gospels, from Mark, the earliest, where no bounty is mentioned, to John, the latest, where the perfidious disciple has become the keeper of the common purse and an embezzler to boot.

Who, then, was the historical Judas? In brief, Maccoby thinks he was one of Jesus' brothers, a Zealot who wanted Jesus to implement immediately the scenario of Jewish nationalistic revolution implicit in his messianic claims. The last we hear of Judas, as Maccoby reconstructs him, he is serving as the third bishop of the Jewish Christian community in Jerusalem.

The extreme insufficiency of evidence (which Maccoby acknowledges) about the historical Judas makes it unlikely that this or any reconstruction will carry the day. His own is as unconvincing as it is bold.

AND this brings us to a third purpose of Maccoby's book. More than a discussion of Judas Iscariot in legend and historical fact, it is a critique of Christianity itself, and an apologetic for Judaism.

In Maccoby's interpretation,

> [T]he Christ-myth belongs to a range of myths that sprang from rites of human sacrifice. . . . [T]he identity of sacrificial victim and sacrificer expresses the victim's willingness to die, and the common tribal identity of the victim and the community which commands and oversees the sacrifice. But this identity of sacrificing community and willing victim is usually concealed behind . . . a "comedy of innocence." The community pretends that it did not command the sacrifice at all, and that it came about against their will. A ritual "washing of hands" takes place to express the innocence of the communal authorities, and the executioner, in reality a public servant, is disowned and sent into banishment.

This means that if the perfidious Judas had not existed—as Maccoby thinks he did not—the Christian tradition would have had to invent him—as Maccoby thinks it did. For according to Maccoby, Judas plays a central and indispensable role in the mechanism of Christian salvation as the Pauline doctrine of atonement understands it. Judas Iscariot is the "sacred executioner" who inspires both hatred and awe because he has performed the great deed that is simultaneously wicked and salvific.

In Maccoby's view, Christianity, at least in the Pauline form that dominates the New Testament, represents a "return of the unconscious," a revival of prehistoric notions that stand in striking contrast to "the Hebrew Bible's civilized and sophisticated stories." Judaism, he argues, had long since replaced the idea of sin-offerings effecting vicarious atonement with a conception of them as gifts presented to God by penitent individuals in recognition of reconciliation. Similarly, the notion of a deed that is both holy and wicked is, in Maccoby's view, utterly non-Jewish, for Judaism "refuses to accept ambivalence in an action" and does not recognize any "admixture of evil" in positive deeds.

THIS polarization of Judaism and Christianity in Maccoby's analysis causes him to miss some revealing Jewish parallels to the evolving legend of Judas Iscariot. In particular, he has missed the striking affinities of the New Testament material with the biblical and later Jewish story of Jacob's son Judah, with his catastrophic proposal to his brothers that they sell Joseph, their father's beloved son and their own half-brother, into slavery. In the book of Jubilees, a Jewish work written about 200 years before the earliest books of the New Testament, the origin of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is attributed to this same sale of Joseph: the young goat in whose blood Joseph's brothers dip his coat to simulate his death is associated with a goat that plays a central role in the ritual of Yom Kippur. Later, in rabbinic literature, this idea of the sale of Joseph as the archetypical sin requiring expiation in every generation becomes explicit.

Since "Judas" and "Judah" are the same name, and since Jesus is the son of a man named Joseph, it is odd that Maccoby did not explore the influence of the evolving Jewish story upon the Christian one—doubly odd, since he thinks Judas was actually Jesus' brother. Had he done so, he would have found that the notion of a despicable act with positive, indeed salvific, consequences is not altogether alien to Judaism after all. "You intended me harm," Joseph tells his brothers at the end of Genesis, "but God intended it for good, so as to bring about the present result—the survival of a numerous people." Without the sale of Joseph (which substitutes for his brothers' earlier resolution to murder him), the people of Israel would have perished in the worldwide famine that, instead, brings them to Egypt for a reencounter with a Joseph now in the position of a powerful savior. Judah's evil proposal to sell his little brother thus saves the life of the entire nation—and yet in post-biblical Judaism it is also and equally a sin associated with annual rites of expiation and (as in the Legend of the Ten Martyrs) with the gruesome deaths of innocent, in fact saintly, figures. The analogy with the central Christian story is patent.

THE same penchant for overdrawing the contrast between Judaism and Christianity accounts for Maccoby's claim that in the former, only repentance and reparation but not sin-offerings effect reconciliation with God, whereas the latter represents a reversion to primitive ideas of vicarious atonement through bloodshed. But the idea that there is no atonement without the shedding of blood is not only found in the Epistle to the Hebrews; it is also found in the Talmud, whose views on such matters are often much less rationalistic and humanistic than Maccoby's

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and, not surprisingly, much closer to the New Testament.

Maccoby's portrayal of Christianity is even less reliable. One must wonder why, if the sacred executioner is an essential constituent of the Pauline conception of atonement, neither Judas Iscariot nor the Jews as deicides appear anywhere in the authentic writings of Paul (whose vehement anti-Judaism actually has a completely different foundation). The emphasis Maccoby places on Judas can obscure the rather telling fact that 22 of the 27 books of the New Testament fail to mention him. This is an omission they share with the great creeds of the early Church, some of which affirm that Jesus suffered or was crucified under the Roman prefect Pontius Pilate but none of which, in enumerating the essential Christian beliefs, mentions the alleged role of Judas or the Jews in Jesus' execution.

It should also be noted that the pernicious identification of Judas with the Jews, though of high antiquity in Christian tradition, is not made in the New Testament itself. The legend of Judas may have had an entirely different motivation from the anti-Semitism for which it later served as a horrifically effective vehicle.

WHAT, finally, would Maccoby do about the prejudice with which the Judas tradition has long been associated in Western culture? He would have Christians "dismantle the Pauline Christian myth of atonement" and replace it with a religion in which "Jesus is revered as a teacher, rather than worshipped as a sacrifice." This would be, however, a religion without a scripture, since sacrificial Christology pervades the New Testament—and, anyway, recovery of the authentic teachings of the historical Jesus is yet another exceedingly speculative project.

Maccoby's book fails to reckon adequately with the sincere efforts of many Christians in recent decades—not only individual theologians and biblicists but also official church bodies—to heal their tradition of its anti-Semitic disease. To be sure, the disease is as old as the

THE NATIONAL INTEREST Fall 1992

The Reach of American Law
Robert Bork

* * *

Strategic Sense, Strategic Nonsense
Colin Gray

* * *

Abrams and the Special Prosecutor
Robert Novak

* * *

France in a New Europe
Daniel Vernet

* * *

Re: START–Advise, Don't Consent
Sven Kraemer

* * *

No Aid to Russia
Nicholas Eberstadt

Sir Michael Howard and
Anthony Hartley *on* Imperialism
and much more

Subscribe today. One year–four quarterly issues–only $21

Send check, VISA or MasterCard Number to:
The National Interest Subscription Department
P.O. Box 3000, Dept. NI, Denville, NJ 07834-9831
Available at better newsstands, or call 202/467-4884.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

New Testament itself and has lasted as long as the Christian tradition, a fact that raises the question of whether these recent efforts represent a permanent cure or only a partial and temporary remission. Though Hyam Maccoby's depiction of Christianity is tendentious, his discussion of the legend of Judas Iscariot in Christian and post-Christian societies is too accurate to permit an optimistic prognosis.

China Plain

CHINA: A NEW HISTORY. By JOHN KING FAIRBANK. *Harvard University Press. 519 pp. $27.95.*
CHINA IN OUR TIME. By ROSS TERRILL. *Simon & Schuster. 366 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by CHARLES HORNER

JOHN KING FAIRBANK, long-time professor of history at Harvard, was the single most important figure in the development of China studies in this country. Born in South Dakota, he prepped at Exeter, was graduated from Harvard, and, as a Rhodes Scholar, went to China in 1932 as part of his doctoral studies at Oxford. Beyond his many writings, he was an organizer, fundraiser, and association founder. He completed *China: A New History* in 1991, just before his death at age eighty-four. For Fairbank to think, at that stage of his life, that China was in need of a *new* history suggests how the scholarly discipline he helped create had changed over the past 50 years and, especially, over the past five.

What is "new" in this survey of China's history from ancient times to the present is, in the best Chinese fashion, more implied than stated, more suggestive than definitive, more methodological than conclusive. The sheer bulk of the work, its large reliance on the specialized and the technical, and its relaxed, non-dogmatic tone add up to a freeing of the subject from contentious political and policy debates. It is the work of a contented historian.

Yet, in truth, this also makes for a rather unexciting history, for there is no great epic here, nor a great moral of the story. Fairbank's new history, concerned with the deep structure of Chinese society, is not particularly venturesome, and has surprisingly little to say about art, literature, and the culture generally. Rather, the building blocks of the book are the many monographs produced over the years under the aegis of Harvard's East Asian Center, which Fairbank founded and then headed for many years. Fairbank gives these works great prominence, and commends them for the persistence and professionalism they embody. It is a form of praise for his students and their products and an acknowledgment that his last book should be understood as a personal monument of a kind, containing within it the outline for the posthumous *Festschrift* which will certainly follow.

Twenty years ago, Fairbank had stated the representative conclusion of the old history so far as contemporary Chinese affairs were concerned. "The Maoist revolution," he wrote then, "is on the whole the best thing that has happened to the Chinese people in centuries." In his new history, he explicitly repudiates this statement, calling it an outstanding example of what he terms "sentimental Sinophilia," the

> occupational quirk of Sinologists, a secondary patriotism or Sinophilia that may lead otherwise hard-headed scholars to want to say no evil of the object of their researches.

But there is more to it, of course, than mere sentiment. Sinologists of Fairbank's generation, who had observed firsthand the wretched circumstances of the country in the 1940's, before and during World War II, welcomed radical social change. Then, as relations between Communist China and the United States deteriorated, full-scale war—beyond the bloody fighting in Korea—was an ever-present possibility; China's revolution had therefore to be portrayed as unthreatening, despite abundant contrary evidence.

FOR the next generation, the depiction of China was bound up in the Vietnam war, since American intervention had been based in part on the prospect of Chinese expansionism. Hence, in the early 1970's, "sentimental Sinophilia" was replaced by what might be called "politically-correct Sinophilia," and the task of perpetuating the benign view of Chinese Communism was taken up by people who were motivated by a mindless leftism rather than by pity for the long-suffering Chinese people.

In this regard, the latest of the many books by the well-known "China-watcher" Ross Terrill is instructive, for the views he formed in the late 1960's and early 1970's are in retreat as the 1990's advance.

Australian-born, Terrill is now an American citizen with a Harvard doctorate, a product of Fairbank's East Asian Center. When he first went to China in 1964 his interest, he says, "was in part that of a young Christian idealist." He has returned many times since, mostly as a political pilgrim (but certainly not the worst among them). He went on to write biographies of Mao and Mrs. Mao and much travel literature, all the while exhibiting a knack for being around while conspicuous things were happening. But his prominence as a commentator began with the opening of China occasioned by President Nixon's visit in 1972. In writing for the general public, but especially for the edification of journalists, Terrill had near-perfect pitch; he knew enough to impress the latter as an expert, yet never burdened them with more than their fidgety quick studying would bear.

China in Our Time has two aspects. The first, an account of Terrill's past involvement with the country and his role as adviser (or, more accurately, kibitzer) in the development of Sino-Western relations, is interlarded with reflections on what he now sees as his

---

CHARLES HORNER *is president of the Madison Center in Washington, D.C. He contributed "Sinology in Crisis" to our February 1991 issue.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

too-enthusiastic embrace of Communist China:

> The excitement of discovering a truly different society made me too open-minded and the feeling of being engaged in counteracting the stupidity of the nonacknowledgment of China had made me insufficiently skeptical of the Chinese Communist party.

Later on, he explains why, during the 1965-67 murderous upheaval called the Cultural Revolution, he "was not open to accept the pathology of Mao's actions." Like many of his cohort, he says, he operated on a mixture of anti-Vietnam-war sentiment, Christian idealism, fear of nuclear war, and a general interest in public affairs. Here, like Fairbank in his invocation of sentiment, Terrill is more than a bit disingenuous. He too easily slides over the dogmatism and the intolerance with which the politically-correct Sinologists of those days enforced an approving attitude toward Communist China within their own profession—while thoroughly misleading the general public.

Still, he *is* contrite. Finding himself in Beijing during the spring of 1989, he went on to produce an outstanding account of the student uprising and its repression. He not only reports on the events, he seems edified by them.* Indeed, upon reflection, he acknowledges that the academic certainties of China studies, especially the assumption about the continued presence of Communism in China, are now up for grabs.

BECAUSE the Chinese are themselves engaged in open argument about their future and their standing in the world, Western observers seem equally free to see China as a real country once again, not merely the site of mind-numbing jargon and bizarre intrigue. It is this new sense of things which allows Fairbank to speculate on the development of "civil society" in China, and which prods Terrill to suggest that we "avoid double standards" in assessing Chinese behavior, that we look at China "not only in its contemporary form but down the long corridor of the centuries."

Such open-mindedness could well produce new and useful insights into China. Western scholars may now, at last, be willing to help us see more of what is there and what has been there than they did when almost all of them felt obliged to accept the necessity and even the desirability of Beijing's domestic and foreign policies.

* Terrill has also become personally involved: in September he was expelled from China for having acted as an adviser to Shen Tong, a leader of the student movement who had returned to China and was arrested as he was preparing to meet with foreign journalists.

Sam, Eve & the Kids

HOME FIRES. By DONALD KATZ. *HarperCollins. 619 pp. $25.00.*

Reviewed by RACHEL ABRAMS

Home Fires is the true-life history of the Gordon family: the parents, Sam and Eve; their multitalented offspring, Susan, Lorraine, Sheila, and Ricky; and their offspring's offspring, Magdalena, Shuna, Shiva, Ram, Gopal, and others. Their biographer, Donald Katz, is a journalist whose work has appeared regularly in *Esquire.*

Katz undertook to write *Home Fires* in the late 1980's, after several years of jogging in New York's Riverside Park with Ricky Gordon, an award-winning composer, the youngest child and only son of Sam and Eve. During those morning runs Ricky regaled Katz with family anecdotes, and Katz, in turn, came to see these stories "as vivid annotations on a historical time line and as parts of a grand family saga of the sort usually found in novels." He wanted to put them together, he says, so that "readers might learn something about themselves and their own lives over the decades." To this larger end, Katz became a consummate scholar not only of the Gordon family but also

RACHEL ABRAMS *has written for* COMMENTARY, *the* Wall Street Journal, *and the* American Spectator.

A CRITICAL CONTINUUM BOOK

William F. Buckley Jr.
In Search of
ANTI-SEMITISM

"If it is anti-Semitic to believe that there are group characteristics among Jews, then anti-Semitism indeed lingers."
—WILLIAM F. BUCKLEY

"The only trouble you have with the Jewish problem is that it will not let you rest, and that you feel called upon over and over again to struggle with it. . . ."
—NORMAN PODHORETZ

"Bill's essay has persuaded me that I have indeed been too complacent."
—IRVING KRISTOL

"Congratulations on the patience, exactitude, and justice of your substantial and substantiated essay on anti-Semitism."
—CHRISTOPHER RICKS

Just published, hardcover edition $19.95
At your bookstore
or order by phone 800-937-5557

CONTINUUM
370 Lexington Ave., New York 10017

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the American Family in general, as well as of most of the popular *ologies* devoted to it, including anthro-, socio-, and psycho-; the findings of these various "sciences" pepper his year-by-year account of the Gordons.

The book begins in 1945 as Sam, a veteran of the war in Europe, all alive and hopeful about the future, returns to the Bronx and to Eve and two-year-old Susan, whom he has never seen. It ends 45 years later, as Sam and Eve sit in peaceful retirement in Florida. In between, this middle-class Jewish couple and their brood are afflicted by, and inflict upon themselves, one calamity after another, including abuse, neglect, drug addiction, yogi-worship, even jail, enduring twice 45 years' worth of tribulation.

Sam and Eve are rather dazzling types. Sam is a brilliant if uneducated man who applies his photographic memory, his uncanny engineering abilities, his "gift for electric," to most of life's enterprises. Eve, with a youthful vaudeville career behind her, brings singing and humor, liveliness and sexiness, into the family sphere. As a couple they are and they remain in love, he perhaps a little more than she, they are very jazzy, and they like to dance.

They have chucked their last name, replacing Goldenberg with the less obviously Jewish Gordon. On his way up the economic ladder Sam eschews the union-bound slavishness of his immigrant father to go into the electrical business for himself, and the couple soon leaves the Bronx behind for a brand new split-level on Long Island. Sam, with his own hands, turns their house into a landmark of beauty and clever engineering in a neighborhood of uniformity.

With her rather daring background, Eve pines for the vanguard, for freedom from the constraints of conventionality. She chooses Hollywood names for her children: Susan is named for Susan Hayward, Lorraine for Laraine Day, Ricky for the character played by Humphrey Bogart in *Casablanca*. She is the life of the party, enchanting her children with songs and stories, endlessly amusing and amused, an Elizabeth Tayloresque beauty, the envy of all neighboring husbands, and even, occasionally, of her own daughters. Yet she somehow also feels disconnected, as if she does not "fit in." She reacts to moments of emotional upheaval peculiarly: scrubbing and rescrubbing her already pristine surroundings; smashing dishes against walls; ironing clothes through the night and into the morning; serving piles upon piles of food, in an orgy of mounting tension, at a dinner table more often resembling a battleground than a familial gathering place.

Indeed, when it comes to their children, these thoroughly modern people reveal themselves as thoroughly crippled. Sam's own early experience of material and emotional privation, facts of life for any number of Jews of his generation, has left its scars, and in particular has left him unable to bend to precocious and difficult children whose demands dumbfound and anger him. Fiercely proud, he clings to a belief in the way things "should" be in a happy, up-to-date family. He wants only to be loved by his children, as he thinks a modern father is supposed to be loved: because he is there. But for a man who is unwilling to give what childish love wants in return, namely, the safe haven of asserted authority, getting that kind of love turns out to be impossible. At every clamor for help Sam shrugs his shoulders in bafflement and disgust, at each escalation he throws up his hands and walks away.

With regard to the children Eve is altogether more supple than Sam, more overtly loving. She talks a good game, about the guilt she "has," as though it were the flu. But where her real responsibility lies she, too, trips over it, "reluctant to rein in kids who were so smart and creative." Between the two of them, where parental action is begged for there is only reaction, or worse yet, inaction. Thus, Sam, seeing what he takes to be hatred in the eyes of his infant daughter Susan when she meets him for the first time at the age of two, tells himself that it is not *his* place to make the first move. She will have to learn to accept him, and she will have to figure it out on her own. And thus Eve, watching Susan, now grown and a junkie, take a nosedive into a plate of sweet potatoes one Thanksgiving, comments: "She's been very tired. She's very, very tired."

Of all the children, Susan's tale is certainly the most harrowing. After winning awards in high school and a scholarship to Vassar, where, as an aspiring writer, she flirts with the black revolution, Susan marries a rising-star *Newsweek* journalist, Michael Lydon. The two of them move to London where they live high on the hog and join the British rock revolution, and then they return to the U.S., to San Francisco, where they live high on the hog and join the radical revolution. The radical revolution sends Susan straight into the embrace of the women's revolution. She launches what will prove to be a fairly successful writing career with an article in the radical Left magazine *Ramparts* entitled "The Politics of Orgasm."

She and Michael have a child, whom they name Shuna. Michael joins the hippie revolution, where he turns on, tunes in, and drops out in an effort to be the sort of person a daughter can be proud of; Susan supports them. Their marriage breaks up and Susan, living a little less high on the hog, joins the drug revolution, gazing dreamily at her daughter's antics through the haze of LSD. She gets a new beau, a rock drummer, and the two of them join the spiritual revolution, finding in the Arica Institute an intellectualizing branch of spirituality that does not rule out drug use: their weekdays are spent standing on their heads in naked meditation, their weekend recreation is snorting heroin. When this quasi-marriage also breaks up, Susan and Shuna return to New York under the patronage of Arica, which has money to burn.

But it is drugs, not men and not spirituality, that Susan really loves, and for the next decade or so she

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

remains their faithful mistress. By 1983, in her fortieth year, she is

> doing two full "bundles"—some twenty bags of quality heroin—every day. Her habit cost over three thousand dollars a week and represented a pharmaceutical intake that would have killed two average junkies twice her size. She'd spent much of the past cold winter wandering . . . Manhattan with plastic garbage bags lining her boots, huddling around fires in oil drums to exchange reconnaissance updates on the whereabouts of "the man."

She flings herself into the downward spiral, from heroin to cocaine and eventually to crack, and drags her daughter with her. When Shuna is not being taken along on outings related to the buying or selling of drugs, she spends her time fending for herself. At the age of eleven she is doing the household laundry and shopping, feeding herself dinners of raw cabbage and vinegar, and cleaning up after her filthy, hollow-eyed, rank-smelling mother. She wonders why no one seems to notice what is happening. At one point she watches her grandmother Eve come upon Susan snorting a mountain of heroin and walk away as if she has not seen what she has seen. She wonders why her grandmother keeps giving her mother money, as if ignorant of what it will be used for. She wonders why no one will rescue her.

In one of this narrative's most poignant passages, Shuna, now a teenager, is lodged temporarily, and not for the first time, apart from her mother. "On most of those . . . mornings," Katz writes, "Shuna awoke surprised that the night had passed without news of her mother's death. But then she remembered that *she* was the one who was dead."

Susan ultimately gets clean of drugs, but not before she has put in some time as a whore to feed her habit, and not before she has done some time in jail.

MEANWHILE her younger siblings keep pace. Lorraine boils with rage against the suffocation of Jewish suburbia. She seeks solace and "cool" in the company of sequin-clad, knife-wielding boys from a neighboring town, and in the coffee houses purveying folk music and rebellion to other, equally blackhearted, children in Greenwich Village. She finds refuge, momentarily, in the arms of one Bobby Shapiro. Pregnant at seventeen, she marries Bobby and moves with him to the Lower East Side, site of her father Sam's youth, there to embrace with her every grim fiber the poverty he once struggled to escape.

Lorraine and Bobby present Sam and Eve with their first grandchild, Magdalena. When the marriage breaks up, she embarks on others, putting on and casting off husbands like a runway model donning and shedding clothes. She dabbles in Oriental culture, overdoses on drugs, undergoes psychotherapy of various stripes, hangs out with Allen Ginsberg. Debilitating disorders assail her: agoraphobia, claustrophobia, cancer, asthma, skin eruptions. Lorraine Gordon Shapiro Hughes Wenzel (Behny—if you count the one she lives with out of wedlock) Heard produces three more children, Ram, Shiva, and Gopal. And when, like her sister before her, she falls upon a true passion, it abides with her for a decade and a half: a bill of spiritual-enlightenment goods sold to her by Yogiraj Sri Swami Satchidananda, the "swami to the stars." Her devotion to his Integral Yoga carries her to his ashram at Yogaville, Va.; it keeps her scrabbling for the money to put macrobiotics on the table while Satchidananda and his pals live like kings and queens; it outlasts a few husbands; it weathers the dismay of her family, taking its fatal blow only when she is widowed from her final husband, a yogi healer who dies of a heart attack. "Just cry for a few minutes," Dr. Swami Feelgood tells her, "and then get up and go do something." This she

The Luckiest Orphans
A History of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum of New York
Hyman Bogen

"This rich social history reads like a cross between a Dickens novel and Stephen Birmingham's *Our Crowd*. From 1860 to its close in 1941, New York City's Hebrew Orphan Asylum (HOA) was more generously endowed than any other American orphanage. . . . Bogen offers concise sketches of orphans, wardens and trustees, revealing instances of abuse but remaining positive about the institution as a whole." — *Publishers Weekly*

"Hy Bogen's book is one that very few people could write. You had to have been a member of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum to understand what it was all about. We were more exclusive than St. Paul's or Andover. We were the chosen few but we didn't do the choosing. **I bless Hy Bogen for telling this story of the HOA. I loved it." — Art Buchwald**

Order toll free 800/545-4703, FAX 410/516-6969, or from

University of Illinois Press
54 East Gregory Drive • Champaign, IL 61820

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

finally does, chucking ashram life to become a healer herself.

Sheila and Ricky have troubles of their own, and plenty of them. Sheila, however, though she is drawn to many of the same fires that burn her sisters, does not immolate herself in them. The least outrageous of the children, and the quietest one—"my easy child," Sam calls her—she enters the counterculture, experiences its degradation, but manages to remain relatively whole. She does not need to rebuild herself from scratch when she emerges. If her parents (and the author) have given her short shrift, that is perhaps all to the good. In the end she is the only Gordon child who succeeds in fulfilling the natural expectations of her class: she marries well, lives a life of luxury and ease, has normal, happy relations with normal, happy children. If there is sometimes open condescension, occasionally even derision, in her siblings' attitude toward her, there is no doubt also a fair measure of unspoken envy.

For his part, Ricky experiences childhood as a series of traumatizing events, culminating in the relieving moment of self-discovery when he figures out that his sensitivities, his longings, have all along been homosexual in nature. While his parents are dancing to the music of Tito Puente, his sisters swaying to gospel and rock, he is passionately devouring opera, and setting his own florid poetry to music. And while his remote father is blindly harboring the manliest of hopes for his youngest child and only son, Ricky is locked in the bathroom, putting on his mother's makeup.

For all their ailments and their failings, the Gordons are an extremely compelling family: the mingling of Sam and Eve's genes produced children of manifold talents, among them the gifts of intelligence, music, writing, painting, general cleverness. And Donald Katz, though his social commentary occasionally makes too jarring a counterpoint to the family drama, in general tells their history in a compelling manner. In becoming the Gordons' biographer he has also become their friend and champion, and he draws the reader skillfully into their lives, unfolding their characters with the patient, loving eye of a novelist.

Still, he falls short with respect to the central, the critical, question: what went awry here? How did all this fertile soil become so fallow? How did these wonderfully-endowed children become living embodiments, each in his or her own fashion, of that whole catalogue of illnesses that made its way into American households in the early 1960's? For Katz there is no one answer. It just happened, history made it happen, the times made it happen, sociology made it happen, psychology made it happen.

For the Gordons, at least, this must be an appealing litany: they are people who go to serious lengths to avoid the truth, even when they believe they are seeking it. But as for Katz's readers, to whom he has held out the promise of learning "something about themselves and their own lives over the decades," they are left to winnow out the true lesson of this book on their own. Nowhere in it will they find *this* simple truth articulated, that, in the name of being modern, a generation of mommies and daddies of a certain class bowed out, and a generation of children suffered the consequences.

We mourn the death of

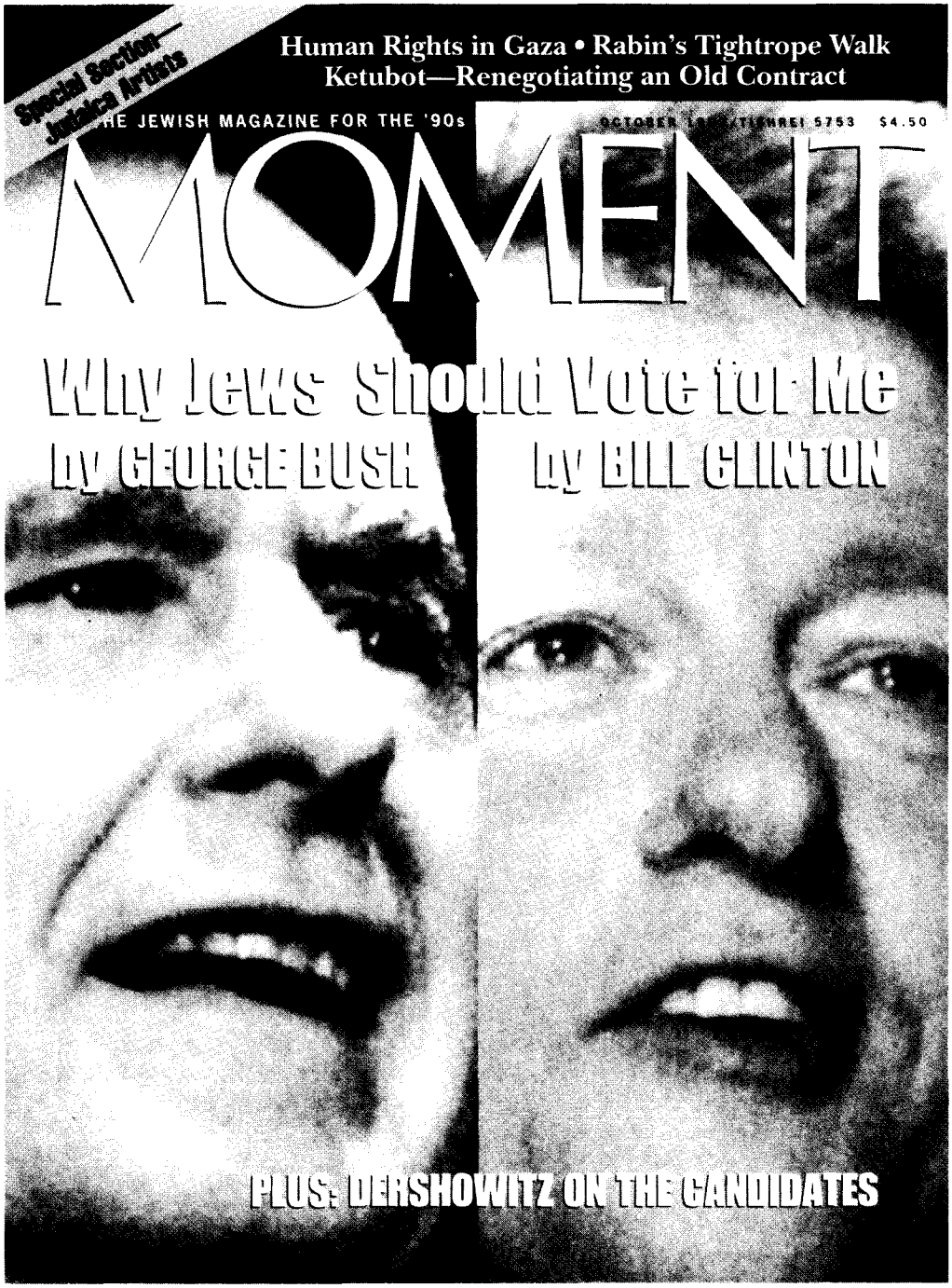
William Barrett

A contributor to COMMENTARY

for forty years and a dear friend.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Special Offer for Commentary Readers


Special Section—Judaica Artists
Human Rights in Gaza • Rabin's Tightrope Walk
Ketubot—Renegotiating an Old Contract
THE JEWISH MAGAZINE FOR THE '90s
$4.50
MOMENT
Why Jews Should Vote for Me
by GEORGE BUSH
by BILL CLINTON
PLUS: DERSHOWITZ ON THE CANDIDATES

This MOMENT is too important to miss!

Get the current edition of MOMENT,
The Jewish Magazine for the '90s,
for only $2.00
by calling **1-800-221-4644**
See what everyone is talking about.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our most important arrival gate is yours.

For every traveler, there is one all-important final destination. Home. So you'll feel better knowing that our flight crews are among the world's most experienced. And that our planes, at an average age of five years, are some of the youngest in the air. You can be sure, wherever your business takes you, getting you there and back safely to those welcoming arms is our greatest passion of all.

A passion for perfection.®

Lufthansa

For more information and reservations call 1-800-645-3880 or see your Travel Agent. Lufthansa is a participant in the mileage programs of United, Delta and USAir.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED